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OF

ENGLISH

HISTORY AND LITERATURE.

VOL. I.

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE LATER NORMAN PERIOD.

"In history a great volume is unrolled for our instruction, drawing the materials of future wisdom from the errors and infirmities of mankind."—BURKE.

"Literature is the thought of thinking souls."—CARLYLE.

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PREFACE.

THE present volume is the first installment of a work which has been planned to provide a cheap and comprehensive library of English History and English Literature from the earliest times to our own day. It is especially designed for the use of those members of the "Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle" who have completed the first course in English History, (Dr. Vincent's "Outline of English History," and Green's "Short History of the English People,") and who are now prepared to combine the study of those "two high departments of human thought—literature and history." This combination is recommended because of a deep conviction that the study of the literature of a people is part of the study of its history. No one can study history worthily without learning a good deal about literature, and no one can study literature rightly without learning a good deal about history.

The aim in compiling this volume has been not merely to give the last results of inquiry into Early English History and Literature, but to put students of history on a course of training which, if faithfully pursued, shall secure to them perpetual profit and pleasure.

In order to give as large an amount as possible of those early English translations which are scattered through many expensive volumes, and are not easily accessible to the general reader, the historical selections for the Celtic, Roman, and Saxon periods have been confined chiefly to summaries of leading events, in the hope, however, that all who use these pages will make frequent reference to Edward Freeman's "Old English History," which is the best short sketch of English History before the Conquest.

To render the work more complete as a student's manual, a guide analysis of the leading points considered is given at the commencement of each chapter or section; and a course of reading has been subjoined to the several periods.

It will be the aim of the editor to make the "Chautauqua Library of English History and Literature" fulfill the promise of its title.

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ENGLISH HISTORY AND LITERATURE.

CHAPTER I.

THE BRITONS AND ROMANS.

I. The British Period:—from date unknown to 55 B.C.

GUIDE ANALYSIS.

I. The Earliest Inhabitants of Britain.
II. The Celtic Occupation of Britain.
1. The Gaul and the Cymry.
2. Mythical Elements in Early English History.
3. The Britons. Their Early Civilization.

I. The Earliest Inhabitants of Britain.

In days long past, while the children of Israel, perhaps, were groaning in bondage and Moses was yet unborn, a non-Aryan people, pressed by want or driven by war, settled in England. The island was then a desolate waste of marsh-land and forest. The bear and the wolf lurked in the caves, the boar and the bison roamed through the thick woods, and the beaver built in the reedy fens. A wild and worthless land and a wretched race; for they passed away leaving little more mark of their presence than did the herds that pastured near their low huts.

History has preserved no record of these earliest inhabitants of England. Only some rude burial mounds, and instruments of flint and bone which are now and then turned up to the spade, are left to tell us about them. But from the evidence gleaned from these remains, it seems certain that generation after generation came and went before they were dispossessed by men of another race. Some knowledge they acquired during these long years; for, "beginning with heavy bones for hammers and sharp bones for knives, they gradually came to manufacture stone instruments and to work in horn; they harpooned the whale, and

fought on more than equal terms with the wild beasts of the forest. But before they had attained higher progress they were surprised by invaders, stronger men with better arms, who slew them or drove them into the hills." *

Concerning the first inhabitants of England, Edward Freeman writes as follows :—

There are still some people left in Europe, in corners and out-of-the-way places, whose language is not Aryan, and whose forefathers were doubtless living in Europe before the Aryan nations came into it. These are the Finns in the very north of Europe, and the Basques in those wild, mountainous parts of Spain which nobody has ever been able thoroughly to conquer. Now, these people no doubt once occupied a much larger part of Europe than they do now, and it is not unlikely that some of them may once have lived in the British Islands before the first Aryan people came into them. Now I will tell you a reason for thinking it very likely that some people who were not Aryan once lived in Britain. It does not seem that any of the Aryan people were ever mere savages, such as travelers and voyagers have often found in distant parts of the world. Yet, from things which have been found in old graves and elsewhere, both in Britain and in other lands, it seems most likely that people once lived in Britain who must have been mere savages, without the use of metal, people who lived wholly by hunting and fishing. They had arrows and spear-heads of flint, and axes and hammers of stone. Think what trouble it must have been to do the commonest things with such tools. After them came a time when men had the use of bronze, and, last of all, the use of iron, as we have now. You may have seen or heard of buildings, if we may call them buildings, made of great rough stones, which are called *cromlechs*. These have often been mistaken for altars, but they really are graves. Huge uncut stones were piled up without being joined by any mortar, and they were covered over with earth and smaller stones, so as to make a tump or barrow. These cromlechs, it seems most likely, are the graves of the first dwellers of the land, who had no use of metal. Of these very early times we can find out nothing, except from graves and such like remains, as, of course, we have no books that were written then. But there is every reason to think that the people who made these great and strange works were the oldest people who lived in these islands, before the Celts, that is the Welsh and Irish, came into the land.

II. The Celtic Occupation of Britain.

The people who succeeded those rude tribes were members of that great Aryan race which has given to the world its best civilization. They were called Celts, and were divided into two classes: the Gaelic, still represented by the Celts of Ireland and the Scotch Highlands, and the Cymric, represented by the Celts of Wales and Cornwall. We do not know when the Celtic people came to England, which they called Britain, but there is scarcely an English village that has not some mark of their pres-

* Pearson's "History of England," chap. i.

ence which carries us back an almost indefinite time in the history of the world. Even before the cradle-days of Rome, the Celts carried on commerce with the Phœnicians; and it is probable that Lud's Town, now known by the name of London, was the capital of a British prince more than three thousand years ago.

The island was too remote from the region of the Mediterranean to have a place in ancient history; but this long tract of time is not left wholly blank, for the legendary story tells us that in the time of the Judges "Albion" was inhabited by giants who were subdued by Brutus, a descendant of Eneas, the Trojan. Brutus gave his name to Britain, and founded London as Troynovant, or New Troy.

Such is the story of national origin given by all the early English chroniclers, who narrate also the succession of a long dynasty of kings, who "did wonderful deeds, gave their names to this place and that, reigned each of them exactly so many years and months, and made an unbroken series from Brut, great grandson of Eneas, through King Arthur, to Cadwallo, who died in the year 689." We are gravely told of one British king flourishing in the time of Saul, of another ruling wisely when "Solomon was on his throne;" and that it was in the days of Isaiah that King Lear divided his kingdom between his wicked daughters, Goneril and Regan. Thus British antiquity is made to run parallel with the most ancient civilizations. By the side of it the first "Olympiad" seems a festival of yesterday.

The origin of this mythical British history is wrapped in obscurity. It was circulated chiefly by Geoffrey Monmouth's "History of British Kings," which was completed in 1147. Geoffrey fathered his chronicle upon a mysterious book which, he tells us, was brought out of Brittany; but it is likely that it was a compilation of all the stories and fables which had currency in the shape of songs and oral traditions among the descendants of the Britons. These stories may be fairly compared to the legends of Greece and Rome, and should be known for the like reason that those are valued; some of the most impressive productions of the greatest poets have been evolved out of the simple stories which form the mythology of British history.*

In these fabulous chronicles there may be some germs of truth; at least they illustrate the simplicity of feeling belonging to the

* One such obscure legend lives in Shakspeare's tragedy of King Lear. Another portion of this early history is given in Wordsworth's "Artegal and Elidure."

period in which Britain was "morally and intellectually, as well as physically, an island in a northern sea;" a period when tales of filial ingratitude and fraternal affection had the same kind of importance as the records of war have in the age to which we now turn.

The authentic history of the Britons has its beginning in the pages of Caius Julius Cesar, about fifty years before the birth of our Saviour. At that time they had among them warlike, enterprising, commercial, and political populations. The people in the south and west of Britain were more civilized than the rest. They cultivated the land, and made cloth for garments; they worked tin and lead mines; and they knew how to make bronze and to fashion jet. But the general level was still low. The ordinary inhabitants lived chiefly on milk and flesh, clothed themselves with the skins of wild beasts, tattooed their bodies, and stained them blue with the juice of woad.

The Britons lived in low huts, with wattled sides and thatched roofs; a single arched entrance served as door-way and window. Their towns were simply clusters of these huts, placed among woods and marshes, and surrounded by a deep ditch and a rampart of felled trees. They were brave and hardy in war; their weapons were long swords, small shields, and darts. They fought in great war-chariots, having scythes attached to the axles.

The people were divided into clans, each under an independent chief. Each clan followed its own customs, and, as may readily be supposed, the different tribes did not live in friendship with each other, but, on the contrary, were engaged in perpetual quarrelings and warfare. It was in consequence of these dissensions that they at last lost their stormy liberty, and became the vassals of Roman masters.

Mr. Pearson, speaking of their mode of life, says:—

> How they lived we know not, except from a few notices; but we know that savage life in a northern climate must have been laborious and hard, a struggle against the beasts of the field, against dearth, and against the elements. The teeth found in skulls are commonly sound in texture, but are often worn away, as if with exercise upon parched peas or grain, or with gnawing bones.* As they ate coarsely, they drank largely of beer and mead, which took the place of wine in the north. Huntsmen and fishermen they would be by necessity; their skill in training dogs seems to show that they took kindly to the sports of the field; and the implements of a game like nine-pins have been found in the north deep down, almost fossilized in a bog,† as the players, no doubt, left them when the final summons hurried them away to that battle-field which was to be their last.

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* Wilson's "Prehistoric Annals of Scotland." † *Ibid.*

To complete the picture, he adds:—

We may reproduce in fancy the British chief, with his "glib" of matted chestnut hair and his moustache, with the broad chest, and long arms, and high cheek-bones of his race, and with the plaid thrown loosely about him, living among his clan like the father-despot of the East, with fighting men to do his will, and with none to share his power except the Druid and the Bard.

The religion of the Britons was a system of idolatry, called Druidism. Their priests were called Druids, who were also prophets, judges, and teachers. They ruled over chief and peasantry; and whoever refused to obey them was "held accursed, and banished from human intercourse." They taught men to worship the gods, and "that souls do not perish with their bodies, but are transferred, after death, into other bodies.*" They also offered human sacrifices upon their altars. They pretended to see visions in dark caves, to gather wisdom from bunches of mistletoe cut with a golden sickle, and to trace in the wandering stars the destinies of men. The Druids lived in the depths of dark oak groves, and in these gloomy retreats the awful rites of Druidic worship were celebrated. Within the groves a solemn circle of mighty unwrought stones inclosed the sacrificial altar. Some of these circles, heaved up in stoneless regions, yet remain as imperishable records of a people who gave their chief strength to the service of religion. The instruction given by the Druids was not confined to sacred things. In their schools they taught the quick-witted Celtic youth all they knew about the heavenly bodies and their motions, the extent of the world, the healing powers of herbs, and the historic tales of the tribes.

Next in importance to the Druids were the Bards, who were the historians of these ancient times, when oral traditions held the place of written records. Passing from tribe to tribe, they sang the achievements of heroes, and answered in each place the "demand for full detail" of the "fierce battle days." Some fragments of the ballads sung by these men are said to be still in existence among the bardic songs of the Welsh and Scottish harpers.

To complete the imperfect details of this sketch of early life in Britain, we may refer to the four great holy-days observed by the Druids: New-year's-day, May-day, Midsummer-eve, and the last day of October. The Druidical New-year's-day was the sixth day of the moon nearest to the tenth of March. On that day, in the presence of the whole tribe, a white-robed Druid rev-

* Cæsar.

erentially cut with a golden sickle the mistletoe bough from the gnarled branches of the oak. A sacrifice of two white bulls and prayers to the gods followed this ceremony. On May-day-eve, when the fields were newly sown, fires were lighted, and sacrifices offered to the solar powers, to obtain a blessing on the seed-time. At Midsummer, when the fruits of the earth were ripening for the harvest, and on All Hallow's-eve, when the harvest was ended, night-fires blazed on moor and mountain; and Bard and Druid joined in the festive rites that marked the celebration of each festival. Many traces of these pagan superstitions are still to be found in popular sports and pastimes. The custom of cutting Christmas greens has doubtless come down to us from these early times; the ceremonies of All Hallowmas, the bonfires of May-day and Midsummer-eve, to borrow the words of an English writer, "still speak to us of the days of Druidism, and evince that the impression of its grim ritual has not been wholly obliterated from the popular imagination by the lapse of nearly twenty centuries."

"Nothing in the early existence of Britain," says Macaulay, "indicated the greatness she was destined to attain." Commenting on this statement, Charles Knight writes:—

> It has been too hastily supposed that mere savages peopled this Britain in her early existence. The Britons, as known to the Romans, were a people of high courage, disciplined and obedient to authority, and yet impatient of subjection; not unacquainted with some important arts of life; exchanging commodities for money of copper and iron; mining and smelting their native tin; possessing an agriculture not wholly unscientific, for they understood the process of marling, and raised cattle in great numbers; a naval people, with boats, and probably vessels of burden, sailing far away into a tempestuous sea; a warlike people, with swords, and shields, and chariots, that could not be fabricated without some mechanical knowledge; a religious people, building temples of gigantic proportions, and raising memorials of the dead in earthworks that rival the wonders of modern engineering.

Such were the Britons when they became known to the Roman world by the invasion of Julius Cæsar, an event which changed the fortunes of Roman and of Briton, and carried its influence on through many centuries. This event marks the beginning of a period which we are now to consider—a period during which ancient things were modified by the introduction of new elements. We shall see how the weak and impulsive, though not unintelligent, Britons underwent a Roman change, yet did not cease to be Britons; and we shall presently see how, through the successive influences of Roman, Saxon, and Norman changes, there came forth the greatest of modern nations.

II.—The Roman Period, 55 B.C. to 449 A.D.

GUIDE ANALYSIS

I. The Roman Invasion.
  1. State of the Roman world.
  2. Immediate cause of the invasion.
  3. Cæsar's coming. Character of resistance offered by the Britons. Tribute.

II. Interval of Ninety-seven Years between the Invasion and the Conquest.
  1. Caligula's mock triumph.
  2. The British king Cunobelin—the Cymbeline of Shakspeare.

III. The Roman Conquest.
  1. The invasion under Aulus Plautius.
  2. Defeat of Caractacus.
  3. Attack of Suetonius upon Mona, the great seat of Druidism.
  4. Revolt of Boadicea. Her defeat and death.
  5. Consulship of Agricola, and general improvement.
  6. Hadrianus and Antoninus's walls.
  7. Severus.

IV. Decline of the Roman Dominion.
  1. Causes of weakness in the empire.
  2. Revolt of Carausius. Constantius and Constantine.
  3. Revolts of Maximus and Constantine.
  4. Britain left to itself.

V. Disturbed State of the Country after the Departure of the Romans.
  1. The coming of the Picts and Scots.
  2. The coming of Hengist and Horsa.

VI. The Early British Church.

VII. Changes Wrought by the Romans.
  1. Excellence of these.
  2. Evil tendencies developed.

I. The Roman Invasion.

The time when we first begin really to know any thing about Britain is between fifty and sixty years before the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. I need hardly say that is the way in which Christian nations reckon time: such a thing happened so many years before, or so many years after, the birth of Christ. At that time the greatest people in the world were the Romans. These were originally the people of the city of Rome, in Italy. They were not so bold at sea as the Phœnicians, nor were they so clever and learned a people as the Greeks. They could not build such fine temples, or carve such beautiful statues, or make such eloquent speeches, as the Greeks could; but they were the best soldiers and the wisest law-makers that the world ever saw.

At Rome, in the best days of Rome, every man knew both how to command and how to obey. The Romans chose their own rulers; but when they had chosen them they submitted to all their lawful commands. They made their own laws; but they did not think that, because they made the laws, they might, therefore, break them. Thus they were able gradually to conquer, first all Italy, and then nearly all the world that they knew of, that is, all the countries round about the Mediterranean Sea. The people of Italy they gradually admitted to the same rights as themselves, so that at the time of which I am speaking every Italian was reckoned as a Roman; but the lands out of Italy they made into *provinces*, and the people of those lands were their subjects. There was no king in Rome, but the people of the provinces had to obey the laws made by the Senate and people of Rome, and were governed by magistrates whom the Romans sent to rule over them. The Romans were very proud of their freedom in having no king or master of any kind, and for a long time they were worthy of their freedom, and used it well: but after a while the nation became much corrupted, and their freedom became little more than confusion and quarreling with one another. The truth is that the Romans were now far too great a people to be governed in the same way which had done so well for them when they were the people of only one city. And for the provinces it would have always been better if the Romans had had a king, or even a tyrant, because one master is always better than many.

At this time the Roman governor in Gaul was named Caius Julius Cæsar. He

is one of the most famous men in the whole history of the world. In many things he was a very bad man, and he thought more of his own greatness than of the good of his country; but there was much in him which made men love him, and as a soldier and a ruler hardly any man has ever been greater. Before his time the Roman province of Gaul was only a small part of the country. Cæsar gradually conquered all Gaul, and he next wished to conquer Britain also, as it was so near Gaul, with only a narrow arm of the sea between them. He twice came over to Britain with his army, but he only visited the southern part of the island, and he cannot be said to have conquered any part of it. Britain did not become a Roman province, nor did Cæsar leave any Roman governor or Roman soldiers behind him. Still, this coming over of Cæsar to Britain was a very important event. From that time Britain became much more known to the rest of the world than it had ever been before. Now that Cæsar had conquered all Gaul, parts of Britain could be seen from parts of the Roman dominions. A great deal more trade went on between Britain and other countries than had ever gone on before. And men at Rome often thought and spoke of making Britain a Roman province as well as Gaul; but it was not till a good many years after Cæsar's time that this was really done.—EDWARD FREEMAN'S *Old English History*.

Our Island History commences with Cæsar. Fables, such as Geoffrey of Monmouth's, translated out of the language of Brittany, of a line of kings before the Romans, have left one legend that has become to all a wondrous reality—the story of King Lear. But all these legends, the cherished lore of the monasteries, were the assured belief of the chivalric ages. Spenser has versified them; Milton has embodied them in stately prose, with a poet's half credulity. No one now craves "to read those books," as the knights of the "Faerie Queene" desired,

> "burning both with fervent fire
> Their country's ancestry to understand."

Our genuine ancestry has stirring stories enough for the gratification of the most romantic temper. For in the real narrative of that ancestry we not only read, in the very earliest times, of kings and priests and mighty warriors, but of a people of strong passions and generous impulses; brave, enduring; dangerous enemies, zealous friends. The first distinct trace of this people is an interesting record of a great nation.

In that portion of Brittany which is now known as the Department of Morbihan dwelt a maritime tribe, whom Cæsar describes as the Veneti. The Morbihan, or little sea, is a gulf, navigable, amid shoals and sandbanks, to Vannes—a name derived from the Roman name of the inhabitants. The towns of this dangerous coast where the storms of the Atlantic render even modern navigation very difficult, were built, according to Cæsar, upon promontories and tongues of shore almost inaccessible, defying a land force when the tide was at flood, and secure that hostile ships would be stranded at the ebb. The hardy race living on this sea-board had a navy of no contemptible character. Their vessels were of small draught, so as to navigate the land-locked shallows, and yet so strongly built as to dare the tempests of the great ocean. The Veneti traded with Britain. In all probability they had a common language with the natives of our southern coasts; unquestionably they had a common religion. Cæsar had overrun the greater part of Gaul; but the Veneti defied him, and seized his envoys who were commissioned to procure corn. The vigorous Roman built a fleet on the Loire, and prepared to march into the revolted country. The Veneti sent for succor to Britain,

and the Britons answered the call. They came, no doubt, in strong boats, such as Cæsar described the Veneti to possess, with flat bottoms, and high prows, and sails made of hides—boats which could bear the fury of the gales between the Lizzard's Point and the Bay of Biscay. They came to resist oppression, without a fear of being themselves oppressed. They knew the power of Rome from the merchants who trafficked with them for the produce of their tin mines; but in their island strength they had no dread of their own subjugation. The Roman poet called them "the Britons almost separated from the whole world." "What greater barrier is there," said Titus to the Jews, "than the wall of the ocean by which they are surrounded?"* In that wall they placed their security. But the barrier that rolled between them and the European continent was even then their great highway. They sailed to the aid of the Veneti, and by this fearless generosity brought down upon themselves the vengeance of Cæsar, after he had made a conquest of their allies. . . .

Upon the shores, then, of this our Britain, in the latter part of the summer of the year 55 before the birth of the Redeemer, appeared a mighty fleet crossing the narrow sea from a port between Calais and Boulogne. Nineteen hundred years ago, on those chalk cliffs whence the coast-guard now watches the steamboat threading its rapid way over the channel, stood the solitary fisherman, amazed at the sight of eighty ships of burden, and vessels with oars, bearing upon a land whose natural harbors had as yet given shelter but to the petty barks of foreign traffickers, the exchangers of copper for tin, and of ornaments for oysters. He might know that embassadors and hostages had been sent to Cæsar; he might know that his countrymen had fought against the Roman, and that vengeance was threatened. It was now at hand. The alarm went inland through many a tribe. The four princes of the Cantii, or men of Kent, rapidly gathered their followers. Nearer and nearer came the galleys. And now the gazers from the cliffs could descry the legionaries and their ensigns. The armed natives crowded to the heights, shouting defiance from their natural defenses. There was risk in encountering a fierce people at such a point. Cæsar had acquired some information of the character of the coast, and he turned his prows northward. Between Walmer and Sandwich the flat beach offered a safe place to plant the foot of a conqueror. The ten thousand soldiers on board the ships saw the beach crowded with horses and chariots, and skin-clothed and painted infantry, with great pointless swords and small shields, howling in contempt, or encouraging each other with songs of battle. The Romans hesitated; but the standard-bearer of the tenth legion leaped from one of the galleys into the water, with the cry of "Follow me." Then met the British and the Roman arm in mortal conflict; but discipline made a good landing against obstinate courage.

The Britons retreating before the legions, Cæsar advanced into the interior, and encamped, according to some writers, on Barnham Downs. The great consul had no desire to remain in the country, and he contemplated wintering in Gaul. He was ready, therefore, to conclude a treaty with the invaded tribes. But a storm arose, and scattered the ships which were bringing the Roman cavalry to these shores; and a heavy spring tide—an unfamiliar phenomenon to the people of the Mediterranean—dashed the transports on the beach, and swamped the lighter galleys. The Britons, encouraged by these misfortunes of the enemy, broke the peace. Cæsar says the Britons were signally defeated. He hastily repaired his ships and sailed to the opposite shore, even without hostages. But

* Flavius Josephus, lib. ii.

early in the next year he returned, with a greater armament, to a sterner conflict. Again he landed on the flat shores of Kent, now undefended; and he marched forward to meet those whom he describes as the island people, who, "for the most part, do not sow corn, but live on milk and flesh, and have their clothing of skins." The people of Cantium either left his passage free, or made no effectual resistance on the sea-marshes; but when he arrived at a river, most probably the Stour, he saw the rising ground behind occupied by the natives. His cavalry drove them into the woods.

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Again a tempest arose, and Cæsar returned to the coast. Meanwhile a leader had sprung up, who had marched some eighty miles from the country divided by the Thames from the maritime states; and he, Cassivelaunus, or Caswallon, gathered his once hostile neighbors round his war-chariot, and showed a bold front to the Roman masses. Pressed by the invaders, he fought his way back to his own territories; and, having crossed the Thames, he endeavored to stop Cæsar's advance by fixing sharp stakes in the bed of the river at the only fordable point. Bede, called the Venerable—the most interesting and trustworthy of our Saxon historians—writing in the eighth century, says: "An immense multitude of the enemy had posted themselves on the farthest side of the river, under the conduct of Cassibelan, and fenced the bank of the river, and almost all the ford under water, with sharp stakes; the remains of which stakes are to be there seen to this day, and they appear to the beholders to be about the thickness of a man's thigh, and, being cased with lead, remain immovable, fixed in the bottom of the river." A part of the river, near Oatlands, is called Coway-stakes even now; and there to this day, in the bed of the river, the stakes remain, formed of the bodies of young oak-trees. . . . Cæsar represents his second landing as a conquest, and that the tribes one by one submitted. But the invaders quitted the country the same year, and went back to Gaul. Hostages he carried with him. Captives he might have taken to adorn his triumph; but he is recorded to have exhibited no trophies beyond a corselet of British pearls. Cæsar did not conquer Britain, says Tacitus, but only showed it to the Romans. It was ninety-seven years before another invasion was attempted.—KNIGHT'S *Popular History of England.*

II. THE INTERVAL BETWEEN THE INVASION AND THE CONQUEST.

During nearly a hundred years no Roman soldier set foot on the British shore. The fear of a fierce people and the tradition of a poor country proved stronger than the lust of territorial conquest. Three several times did Augustus resolve to enforce the promised and intermitted tribute. Twice he was delayed by revolts in the empire, and once withheld till the moment to strike was past, by a British embassy which sought him out in Gaul. Yet the presence of two exiled princes at his court, who perhaps were paying the penalty of Cæsar's protection, and who certainly implored succor from Rome, shows that the submission of Britain was only nominal. Presently another exile, the banished son of the most powerful prince Cunobelin, offered homage to Caligula for his father's dominions. Caligula led his army to Boulogne, and there, dismayed at his own enterprise, or appeased by tribute and tenders of submission, put out to sea for a short distance in his trireme, and presently returned in triumph as undisputed lord of the ocean. It is even said that he ordered his rough veterans to pick up shells on the sea-sands

in token of his success; but the story is probably colored by the bitter hatred of his historians, and it is more likely that the Britons averted the attack by a submission that left them free. During all this period the island seems to have flourished. . . . Cunobelin, perhaps the grandson of Cassibelaun, and heir of his ambition, established a federal sovereignty, which included all the islands south of the Humber.* His palace was at Camulodunum, near Colchester, and he seems to have struck coins there and at Verulam; but London was already the real center of trade. From it highways radiated across the island, especially along the Anglian and south-eastern coasts, where the commerce with the North and with Gaul was already important. A bridge was thrown across the Thames a little above the part where the tide is distinctly felt. A small custom's duty, levied at the Roman ports, was apparently paid without difficulty.—PEARSON'S *History of England.*

III. The Roman Conquest.

This tranquillity was not destined to endure. Neglecting the precedents of the first two emperors, who had seen the danger of extending their boundaries, Claudius sent an army into Britain. So high was the reputation of British valor that four legions under an able commander, Aulus Plautius, were considered necessary for the enterprise, and the mere announcement of the service required, at first caused a mutiny in the camp. Nevertheless, the Roman army was unopposed on the southern strand, and advanced, after two slight engagements, to a river, probably the Medway. Plautius sent his horse across the stream, and, after two days' fighting, followed up a brilliant victory to the Thames. A fourth battle took him to its north bank; but the Britons, not dismayed by their defeat, only gathered in fresh force to crush the enemy. The Roman general halted, and sent to Claudius for support. The emperor, probably not unprepared for the call, responded to the summons in person. Camulodunum was invested by the imperial army, and the Trinobantes, routed before their intrenchments, were panic-stricken, and surrendered. Claudius retired to enjoy a triumph and the surname of Britannicus. But the sovereignty of Cunobelin had been too firmly established to be destroyed by a defeat, even at the gates of his capital. His son Caractacus, to whose share the western part of the kingdom had, perhaps, been assigned at his father's death, took up the struggle in which his brother, the partner of his throne, had fallen. Vespasian, the best general of the age, beat the British prince before him to the hills of Wales, in a bloody conflict which cost more than thirty battles, and the storming of more than twenty towns. Britain, south of the Thames, was then Roman; but Caractacus was unsubdued. For nine years he hung upon the onward Roman march, never able to advance far from his Welsh stronghold, and from the tribes still faithful to his cause, yet never willing to intermit the conquest, and live unmolested in a mountain principality. Such a struggle could only have one end. In an attempt to intercept Ostorius Scapula, who had penetrated into North Wales, Caractacus sustained a decisive rout. The worthless Queen of the Brigantes, to whom he fled for shelter, betrayed him to the invader. Caractacus graced a Roman triumph; but his courage commanded the respect of his enemies, and he and his family were allowed to live in an honorable captivity.

* More than forty varieties of Cunobelin's coins still exist, and attest his importance.—PEARSON, p. 29.

The fortified towns of the Romans, more numerous relatively in Britain than in any other province of the empire, attest the obstinate nature of the struggle by which their dominion was won inch by inch from the foe. The strength of the national movement lay in Druidism, and the professors of that faith could not hope for tolerance from Roman contempt. Human sacrifices were forbidden in Gaul; the very possession of a Druidical amulet had been punished by Claudius with death. Accordingly, eleven years (A. D. 61) after the capture of Caractacus, the new prefect, Suetonius Paulinus, penetrated to the sacred island of Mona, (Anglesea,) where the native religion had its citadel. The shores were thronged with armed men, with Druids invoking the aid of their native gods, and with black-robed Sibylline women, who ran to and fro with torches, animating their countrymen. But the veterans of Rome were proof against superstitious terrors. They scattered the troops opposed to them in one successful charge, cut down the defenseless priests mercilessly, or thrust them upon their own altar fires, and destroyed the sacred groves. Druidism disappears from this time as an historical religion. It is probable that it was still a recognized faith in Ireland, and that it lingered on in England for centuries after altars had been raised to other faiths—a superstition without temples or rites. The Bards, whom Roman policy proscribed as vigorously as the Druids, reappear to exult in the fall of the Roman Empire; but the priestly caste, if it was ever distinct from the poetical, perished absolutely.

During the absence of Paulinus in the west, a rebellion had broken out, which had threatened to sweep the invaders back into the sea. During twenty years of dominion the Romans had organized tyranny till it became insufferable. Independent princes were controlled by Roman residents; the flower of the British youth was drafted into the legions; heavy taxes were exacted from a people little accustomed to bear taxation; and money lent out on usury to the needy provincials by rich capitalists, such as Seneca, moralist and sycophant, was recovered by the stringent processes of Roman law. So complete was the subjugation of the conquered that Prasutagus, king of the Iceni, inscribed the republic as his heir, in the hope of securing an honorable provision for his wife and daughters. That hope was deceived. Boadicea, the widowed queen, was publicly scourged, and her daughters given to the camp. Roused by this unutterable shame, and fired by the passionate eloquence of their queen, the Iceni sprung to arms. The Roman colony of Camulodunum. (Lexden,) deceived by the Trinobantes with friendly assurances, was stormed on the second day of the siege, and the happiest of its defenders were those whom the sword did not spare for the torture. The insurrection was now national, and the British forces successively sacked Camulodunum, Verulam, and London, turning round fiercely on the ninth legion, which hung in their rear, and defeating it at Wormingford, on the Stour. The commander of the Second Legion was panic-struck, and remained inactive at Cærleon, (Isca Silurum,) but while the insurrection wasted its strength in storming towns, Suetonius, rapidly marching up from the Chester at the head of the fourteenth legion, and a few picked soldiers of the Twentieth, had deliberately left London to its fate, and stood at bay with his back to the sea, having, probably, been intercepted on his march to Camulodunum. This position, in which the Roman flanks were secured by wood, hill, and fortified lines, gave no advantage to the numbers of the Britons. Their disorderly masses were soon penetrated by the Roman wedge, and a fearful massacre of eighty thousand avenged the seventy thousand Roman colonists whom the insurrection had slain. Boadicea died by her own hands. Order

reigned again in Britain; but the Romans had learned by fearful experience that they were not dealing with the soft men of the South. Suetonius was speedily recalled, and a milder policy inaugurated.

The next critical epoch in British history is the government of Caius Julius Agricola, A. D. 78. Agricola found the marches of Wales in insurrection, and the country north of the Humber still unsubdued. In a series of masterly campaigns he reduced the whole of the island south of the Tay, forced the passage of the Grampians, and secured the northern frontier of the empire by a line of forts between the Frith and Clyde. It is strange that a statesman so able, and so reckless of human life as his countrymen in general, should not have exterminated the tribes of the north, whom no barrier could long restrain from forays upon the Lowlands. The difficulty, in fact, applies to the whole policy of the Romans in Great Britain. It seems as if less labor than constructed the two fortified lines of the north, and less expenditure of men than the perpetual presence of an armed foe involved, would have carried roads through the Highlands, and destroyed every barbarous clan in the mountain glens. The answer probably is, that without an efficient fleet the Romans could not pursue the fugitives into the Hebrides, or hope to prevent a fresh immigration from Ireland. There are some evidences that the Roman sword did its work at times with terrible through-goingness. The Mæatæ were the most powerful people whom Xiphilinus knew of in the Scotch lowlands, and their name, as it were, included all others. Yet they disappear altogether from history, and are replaced by the Picts,* or by the Brigantes from the Cumbrian district, and by the barbarous Atticotti, who had probably been their subjects. Indeed, we find that the Irish difficulty did actually suggest itself to Agricola. He resolved to conquer that island in order that his British subjects might no longer see any free country from their own shores. He even entertained a fugitive Irish chief as a pretext for invasion. But the jealousy of Domitian recalled the successful governor A. D. 86, while his work was yet undone.

Nevertheless, the eight years of Agricola's government had effectually reduced England to a province of the empire. By a fresh arrangement of the taxation the people had been relieved of their heaviest burdens; men of character had been chosen as officials. Hitherto the public granaries had been grossly mismanaged; districts had been compelled † to send their contributions of corn to a distance, and even to buy it back again from private speculators at fancy prices. Agricola crushed the whole system at a blow. As fortified towns sprung up every-where in the tracks of the legions, the tribes were awed into peace. Conciliated by a sound policy, and dazzled by the magnificence of their civilized conquerors, they began to copy the arts they saw around them. The sons of the chiefs learned to speak Latin, affected the use of the toga, and began to accustom themselves to

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* Mr. Herbert ("Britannia after the Romans") whose view has been followed by the best modern critics, regards the name Pict (painted) as merely the Latin translation of Briton, or Brith, Variegatus. What we know of the language and history of the people indicates that they belonged to the Cymric family.

† The words of Taciturn (Agricola, cap. 19) are very difficult. I translate them: "They (the Britons) were constrained in mockery to sit before closed granaries, and to buy, whether they wanted or not. Bypaths and distant places were assigned, so that the cities might carry the supplies commanded for the next winter-quarters into distant and difficult parts." It would seem that the communes were compelled to furnish rations to the Roman troops; and that the corn thus supplied was called in in a vexatious manner, and sometimes forced back upon the natives at arbitrary prices by the officials. PEARSON, p. 36.

bath and banquet. The large-minded statesman was civilizing a new people while he seemed to be only attaching them to the empire.

For two centuries after the time of Agricola the history of Roman Britain is without a single dramatic episode. Between the Forth and the Tyne there was almost incessant war with the northern tribes. About the time of Hadrian's accession so terrible were the losses sustained by the Romans that they bore comparison with the bloodshed of the campaigns in Palestine. Accordingly, in A.D. 120, the emperor thought it necessary to visit the island in person, and constructed a vallum, or fortified earthern mound, strengthened with a ditch, from Bowness to Tynemouth, across the Northumbrian hills. Twenty years later, under Antonius, the praetor Lollius Urbicus completed the lines of Agricola by a similar rampart between Caer-riden on the Forth, and Alcluith (Dunbarton) on the Clyde. Down to this time apparently the tribes under Roman rule had never been disarmed, as we find the Brigantes making war upon some of their neighbors who were in the Roman alliance. Antoninus punished the offenders by mulcting them in a portion of their territory. The disorders of the empire, in which the British legions took a full share, under Commodus, A.D. 190, encouraged the northern marauders to renew their attacks. But their dangerous success provoked the Emperor Severus to take the field in person. He found a Roman province, probably Valentia, comprising the lowlands and Northumberland, overrun by barbarians. Putting by their overtures for peace, he advanced cautiously into the country, cutting down the forests, making causeways across the morasses, and driving in the cattle and sheep every-where. The tribes retreated before the Roman army, and Severus dictated peace at the Frith of Cromarty. But he bought his success dearly. Fifty thousand soldiers perished in that terrible war, in which the enemy never appeared in the field, never ceased to pursue the march, and spared none whom they overtook. Severus retired to York, and strengthened the work of Hadrian with a new vallum. The fatigues of the late campaign were fast killing him; his last moments were disturbed with the news of a fresh incursion by the barbarians, and his last advice to his son was to extirpate the whole race mercilessly. That advice Caracalla neglected, and withdrew, leaving Britain to the care of its prefects.—PEARSON'S *History of England.*

IV. DECLINE OF THE ROMAN DOMINION.

During the third century the Roman empire was fast breaking up. It had succeeded in weakening the nationality of its subject peoples, but it had not molded them into citizens; they were provincials, not Romans. In fact, it was no object of the emperors to revive traditions of the republic, or excite an enthusiasm for the old Roman greatness that must have ended in the desire for the old Roman liberties. Every institution of the empire tended to replace the idea of a common country by the phantom of a central authority, against which combination should be impossible. Citizenship, indeed, was forced upon all, and the old distinctions of separate franchises were annulled; but then citizenship, in the third century, meant only the obligation to pay taxes, and not the right to make laws, or to hold office. Foreign officers led the legions, foreign consuls assembled the senate, and the emperor himself was often sprung from the obscure blood of races whom the old Roman patricians had only considered fit for the amphitheater. Above all, society was split up into several castes. A small aristocracy of office and a pariah population of slaves were the two extremes. Between these, as we

have seen, came the decuriones, whose only duty was to produce wealth, and pay taxes on it to the treasury. That these men might neither be soldiers nor Christian priests, except by express permission, implied in itself that the empire did not desire its citizens either to carry arms or to take other service than its own. Inaction and timidity were, therefore, forced upon the middle classes at the very moment when the Goth was at the gates of the empire. Meanwhile, the legions were a separate society, recruited from the few country districts of Italy where a peasantry still remained, but still more from military colonies and from barbarous tribes. They were subject only to their own tribunals, and encouraged by these in a soldatesque license against civilians; the very title of the head of the State, imperator or general, seemed to justify the pretensions of the troops to supersede the senate and name their sovereign.

Under these circumstances, it is not wonderful if Britain, the most remote and military province of the west, was the one in which pretenders to the crown were most frequently set up by the legions. Already, in A.D. 277, Probus had thought it expedient to settle Burgundian and Vandal colonies in the island, with a view of dividing the forces of any future revolt; yet only ten years later, under Diocletian, Carausius, a Menapian or Belgo-German by birth, had succeeded in establishing an insular royalty. A sailor by profession, he had been intrusted with the defense of the coasts of Britain and North Gaul against the Frisian pirates. But as he never overtook their fleets until they had done the work of havoc, and never restored the plundered wealth to the provincials, it was thought he acted in concert with the enemy, and instructions were given from Rome to put him to death. Carausius heard of the orders in time to escape into Britain, assumed the purple, and usurped the empire. The Roman legion then on the island seems to have acquiesced sullenly in a revolution it could not defeat. A more reliable army was constructed of a few auxiliary cohorts who were taken in detail and absorbed, and of foreign mercenaries, who flocked to serve under a countryman, and enjoy the rich pay drained from the province. Even merchants from Gaul were drafted into the ranks. But the strength of the usurper was in his fleet, which commanded the British seas, and hurled the imperial galleys back upon Gaul. Maximian was baffled for a time, and a peace was concluded which left the rebel in possession of Britain, and with the title of Imperator. Carausius seems to have governed with great ability. He drove back the northern tribes, who were plundering Valentia, and bridled the country with seven forts along the lines of Antonine. He is commemorated in Irish legend as Caros, king of ships; and a probable tradition says that he brought over some of the conquered Gwyddelian Picts, and settled them in the rescued but desolated northern districts. He was not destined to found a royal line. The prestige of victory left him when Constantius, the newly adopted Cæsar, took Boulogne, the stronghold of the British fleet. The usurper fell by the hands of Allectus, one of his officers, (A.D. 294,) and the island, left without a capable head, was soon retrieved to the empire by a successful enterprise. Constantius passed the British fleet in a fog, (A.D. 296,) burned his ships as soon as he landed, and marched boldly upon London. The Roman legionaries of Britain do not seem to have been brought into the field; they probably could not be trusted. The Franks, who composed the staple of the rebel force, were routed in the field, and when they attempted to fire and plunder London in their flight, were cut to pieces in the streets.

Constantius is described as a mild and sensible man. The presence of his imperial court was no doubt grateful to British pride, and a source of profit; his

mild enforcement of the Diocletian persecution, and the fact that the first Christian emperor was his son, have been titles to the favor of ecclesiastical historians. But, except one expedition against the ever-restless Caledonian tribes, Constantius achieved nothing memorable before his death at York, A.D. 306. His son, the famous Constantine, is the one historical instance of the British *tyrannus* who became emperor of the whole Roman world. For it is important to observe that the true tyrant was not an adventurer like Carausius, contented with a separate kingdom, but a rival emperor, with all the insignia of office, with a senate, consuls, and lictors, maintaining the tradition of a Roman empire, one and indivisible. His nearest parallel is to be found in the antipopes of Latin Christendom. In this imperial fiction lay the strength and the weakness of every revolt: it carried the soldiers with it, but it never stirred the pulses of national life. The fact, however, serves to prove how completely the existence of universal empire had already been confounded with the right, and explains the affectation of Roman titles centuries after the eagles had left the island. It was partly a dim sense of legality, an uneasy feeling that all dominion was derived from Rome, that led the Saxon kings of the tenth century to call themselves basileus and imperator in their charters.

The history of Constantine, when he had once set out on the expedition that laid the world at his feet, is of no especial importance for the secular aspects of Britain. The island enjoyed a peace of some fifty years, only broken by the revolt of Magnentius, A.D. 350, whose British birth, perhaps, enlisted the sympathies of his countrymen, and by a bloody inquisition, conducted by a covetous Roman notary, as to the authors of the revolt. Under Julian, A.D. 360, and his successors, we hear constantly of renewed invasions from the Picts and Scots, with whom the name of the Saxons begins to be joined. Once, at least, (A.D. 367,) by a concerted rising the barbarians laid the whole country at their feet. Fullofaudes, Duke of Britain, was shut in by superior forces, and Nectaridus, Count of the Saxon coast, was slain. Theodosius, landing with re-enforcements, found the country between Richborough and London covered with marauding troops, who were driving before them cattle and captives for the slave-market. On this occasion an ample vengeance was taken. But the island was never safe from forays that threatened the people with the worst miseries of war. It was in one of these inroads that St. Patrick and his two sisters, well-born, gently nurtured, and mere children, were carried off and sold into different countries: the future apostle to attend swine, his sisters to endure the passion and caprice of their owners. It is probable that the famous wall, called Hadrian's, was erected under these conditions of life and during this century. It was the natural defense of timid people against marauders. Taking a parallel course to the lines of Hadrian and Severus, it scaled the most difficult mountain cliffs, and planted towers and ramparts twenty feet high in a country so bleak and rugged that a hundred and twenty years ago no road traversed it. Behind this and the walls of their cities the descendants of the fierce Brigantes awaited in terror the inroads of their unconquered countrymen, and looked for protection to the foreign legionaries, who plundered and insulted them, but who still remained faithful to the Roman labarum.

The fall of Roman Britain was precipitated by the insurrection of Maximus, whose excuse was that he dared not refuse the purple which the troops offered him. An Iberian by birth, Maximus had married a British lady; his family were settled in their mother's country, and his fortunes, varied in a thousand ways, have been the subject of a cycle of Welsh legends. Supported by the sympa-

thies of his adopted fatherland, Maximus succeeded in raising a large number of British recruits, and passed over with these, and with the flower of the Roman army, into Gaul. Partly, perhaps, influenced by his wife, who was a zealous follower of St. Martin, bishop of Tours, Maximus tried to give his struggle an ecclesiastical character; and after a few years' sovereignty in Gaul marched into Italy to put down innovations in Church matters. He was defeated and slain at Aquileia A.D. 388. Unfortunately for Britain, his native recruits never returned to the island. Some had fallen in fight, others had been settled in Armonia; and the island, thus deprived of its natural defenders, was more than ever the prey of barbarous foes.

Neither could it be hoped that Rome, unable to defend herself, would protect her provincials. In the desperate rally which Stilicho made, we find him, indeed, contriving to send an additional legion into the island, (A.D. 396.) But it was withdrawn six years later, having only driven back the Picts and Scots into their fastnesses, and assisted the Britons to complete or repair their wall. The island, however, was still nominally Roman, and garrisoned by a few companies of troops who were well affected to the empire. But in A.D. 407 these men seem to have been panic-struck by the rumors that a barbarous league of Vandals, Suevi and Alani, had overrun Gaul, and meditated the conquest of Britain. In a hasty instinct of self-defense the soldiery elected two tyrants to head them against the enemy, and murdered them when they proved incompetent for their duties. The third time the choice fell upon a common soldier, Constantine, who took care to occupy his dangerous subjects with an expedition into Gaul. Fortune favored him; a great victory gave Gaul into his hands; and his son, Constans, whom he withdrew from a monastery, succeeded in recovering Iberia. The emperor, to whom Constantine had apologized for the treason forced upon him, appeared for a time to admit the excuse, and accepted him as a partner in government. But the alliance was dissolved on the first opportunity. A treacherous general, Gerontius, slew Constans, (A.D. 411,) and his father was captured and put to death by the troops of Honorius. Britain, however, did not revert to Rome, for Honorius was in no position to pursue his victory. The great results of Constantine's struggle had been that a barbarous invasion from Gaul was warded off, and that Britain was left, without soldiers, to direct its own destinies. The native tribes, the foreign settlers, the Roman colonists, in the towns, were left without an army, without imperial taxes, without any central government. They differed among themselves in traditions, faith, language, and ancestry. Yet for the majority among them, who had, at least, the habit of Roman culture, union of some sort was a necessity if they wished to preserve all upon which the happiness and self-respect of society are founded from the lust and riot of barbarian conquerors.—PEARSON'S *History of England.*

V. DISTURBED STATE OF THE COUNTRY AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF THE ROMANS.

On the final departure of the Romans the chief towns in Britain became the centers of petty kingdoms under the rule of military chiefs. Instead of uniting together against their old enemies, the Picts and Scots, they made war against each other, thus again offering themselves an easy prey to warlike invaders.

Soon plundering bands of Picts and Scots, breaking over the wall of Severus, ravaged the land. The Britons were left with Roman arts and arms and civilization, but in consequence of the weakness that followed their dissensions they were helpless in the simple necessity of self-defense. The common danger compelled them to unite in sending to the Romans for help. An appeal, called "The Groans of the Britons," was sent to Etius, Prefect of Gaul, saying: "The barbarians chase us into the sea, the sea throws us back upon the barbarians; and we have only the hard choice left us of perishing by the sword or by the waves." Help could not come from Rome, whose expiring strength was sinking before the hosts of Attila the Hun, an enemy so terrible as to be called "the scourge of God," and the Britons had to look elsewhere for assistance.

Just then some ships filled with Saxon freebooters were cruising off the southern coasts, under the command of two brothers, Hengist and Horsa, by name. These pirates were bold mariners, rejoicing in sea-storms; they were wild and warlike; brave, and armed with long swords, spears, and battle-axes made of steel. They were pagans; their belief made them fierce and terrible in war, for they thought death on the battle-field admitted them to Valhalla, their heaven—a realm where warriors drank wine out of the skulls of their enemies. Such were the people to whom the Britons turned for help in the year 449.

VI. The Early British Church.

It is generally believed that Christianity was introduced into Britain before the end of the second century. Tertullian (who died about A.D. 220) speaks of places in Britain not reached by the Romans, but yet subject to Christ. Eusebius, indeed, declares that some of the apostles preached in Britain; Stillingfleet and others insist that St. Paul was the founder of British Christianity. Clemens Romanus (A.D. 101) says that Paul went to the limits of the West; and Theodoret (who died A.D. 457) says that Paul brought salvation to the isles of the ocean. But none of these hints amount to proof. Other traditions use the names of St. James, of Simon Zelotes, and of Joseph of Arimathea; asserting that the latter came over A.D. 35, or about the twenty-first year of Tiberius, and died in England. Of all this there is no proof. Another legend is that an English king, Lucius, sent messengers to Eleutherius, Bishop of Rome, asking for Christian instruction; that the messengers were converted and ordained, one a bishop and the other a teacher; and that on their return King Lucius and his chief men were baptized, and a regular Church order established. But it is very doubtful whether there ever was a King Lucius, and the whole story is now generally discredited. The Gospel having been introduced into Britain, a Christian Church subsisted there, though not always in an equal degree of vigor, till the persecution of Diocletian. It then acquired new strength from the fortitude of its martyrs. Though the names of

only three have been recorded, (St. Alban, Aaron, and Julius.) yet all historians agree that numbers suffered in Britain with the greatest constancy and courage. The first martyr is said to have been St. Alban, who lived in the town of Verulam, which had a Roman colony: he had been converted from paganism by a teacher to whom he had afforded protection from the general persecution. Though Constantius, the Roman governor of Britain, had an inclination to favor the Christians, yet it was not in his power to dispense with the edicts of the emperors, and he complied so far with them as to demolish the churches. Though he died a pagan, yet he granted to the Christians the free exercise of their religion, and protected them from injury or insult. This emperor died at York, and was succeeded by his son Constantine, A.D. 306. The best illustration of the early organization of Christianity in Britain is the fact that three British bishops attended the council at Arles, A.D. 314. British bishops also attended the councils of Sardica, A.D. 347, and of Ariminum, A.D. 359.

Little is accurately known of the real state of Christianity in this period. Pelagianism took root in Britain, (the native country of Pelagius,) and the British bishops called in Germanus and Lupus from Gaul, who refuted Pelagius at the conference of Verulam, A.D. 446. They also founded a cathedral at Llandaff, making Dubricius bishop, with extensive jurisdiction. The monastery of Banchor, (Bangor,) near Chester, was founded at about the same time.—M'Clintock & Strong's *Cyclopædia.*

There were then scattered among the people of Ireland and Scotland devoted men of their own race, known as Culdees, servants and worshipers of God, who were engaged in diffusing Christianity. Patrick added to the energy of the work done by these men in Ireland. It was an Irish abbot, Columba, who in the year 563 passed into Scotland, and from the age of about forty to the age of seventy-five worked as a Christian missionary on the mainland and in the Hebrides. His chief station was in the Hebrides, upon the rocky island of Iona, which has an area of 1,300 Scotch acres, and lies off the south-western extremity of the island of Mull. After him it was called (Iona-Columb-kill) Icolmkill; and the religious community there gathered by him, at first rudely housed, became the head-quarters of religious energy for the conversion of North Britain, the missionaries being devout native Celts, gifted with all the bold enthusiasm of their race, who were in relation rather with the Eastern than the Western Church.—Henry Morley in *Cassell's Illustrations of English Religion.*

VII. Changes Wrought by the Romans.

For four hundred years the Roman influence was at work in a great part of Britain, and that influence produced results which were felt all through Saxon times. Let us hear several historians on the general result of the Roman occupation.

We may say that the whole country became Roman. Many Romans doubtless came to live in Britain, and many of the Britons tried to make themselves as much like the Romans as they could. They learned to speak Latin, and to dress and live in the same way that the Romans did. Towns were built all over the country, and roads were made from one town to another; for the Romans were among the best builders and the best road-makers that ever were in the world. Many

remains of Roman walls and other buildings are still found, sometimes in towns which are still inhabited, and sometimes in places which are now deserted. There are pieces of Roman work at Caerleon, Caerwent, Leicester, Lincoln, and many other towns which are now forsaken, like Pevensey in Sussex, and Burgh Castle in Suffolk. The Romans could not build such beautiful buildings either as the Greeks built before them or as Englishmen and Frenchmen have built since, but for building things which would last no people ever did better. A Roman wall is generally built of rows of small square stones, banded together with courses of long thin bricks; the arches are round, sometimes made of the same sort of bricks, sometimes of larger stones; so it is easy to know them.

The Romans, and the Britons who had made themselves Romans, must have pretty well occupied the whole land, as we not only find remains of towns in all parts of the country, but also of villas or country-seats. You know that now in England the noblemen and chief gentlemen do not live in towns. Most of them spend part of the year in London, but their homes are at their houses in the country. You know that the counties have their own magistrates and every thing quite distinct from the towns, or, where it is not so, the people of the towns are under the magistrates of the country. But in the Roman times it was quite different. The towns were then almost every thing. . . . A Roman town had a good deal of freedom in its own local affairs, but there was no freedom over the land. The emperors did as they pleased in their several provinces. There were heavy taxes to pay, and much oppression in many ways. Still, it always happens that a barbarous people gain something by being conquered by a more civilized people; Britain and the other provinces learned much from the Romans, which they did not know before; commerce, agriculture, and all the arts improved; in short, they became civilized people instead of barbarians.—EDWARD FREEMAN'S *Old English History.*

As the missionaries of the Christian faith carry the sacred truths of our religion among the ignorant and benighted, the Romans, the missionaries of social life, carried their domestic ideas and private habits into whatever quarter they visited. More efficacious in reclaiming from barbarism than any eloquence or authority was the sight of the daily existence of the race which had conquered the world. The forebodings of the civilized natives were founded on the reverence they themselves had entertained for the outward symbols of settlement and peace. The comfortable house, the cultivated garden, the ornamented street, the richly decorated temple—these they had looked on as the external manifestations of the imperial power, and of the security and freedom they enjoyed. When the assailant comes, they thought, he will wreak his first vengeance on the monuments of that happier existence which he does not understand, and what distinction will be left between the howling barbarian who never knew the elevating enjoyments of a safe and happy home, and the dispossessed proprietor of whose peaceful cottage, as it was in ancient days, an emblem of advanced intelligence and recognized law, is now a charred and crumbling ruin, the type of a return to the same savage degradation from which the Romans drew our ancestors so many hundred years before.

The humiliating truth implied in those helpless anticipations must be confessed with respect to all the other populations which had become subject to Rome. She first civilized them with her arts and elevated them with her principles of law, and then enervated them with her protection, and, as her own ancient spirit decayed, corrupted them with her vices. A government can do too much as well as too little.

The central power was every-where; and, except in the petty struggles of the municipal towns, individual action was unknown. The frightful wickedness of the capital was extolled and imitated here. Men who could not fight and would not govern crowded to the amphitheater and saw the combats of beasts and gladiators. As we feel no compassion for the overthrow of the wild liberties of our barbaric predecessors by the Claudian invasion, we shall do well to curb our indignation at the destruction of a refinement which incapacitated a people from serious endeavors, and of a system of government which reduced it to the dependent condition of children or slaves.—WHITE'S *History of England.*

Many traditionary customs and superstitions which have come down to us from the Roman period still bear testimony to the Roman influence. Our parochial perambulations are the ancient Terminalia; our May-day is the festival of Flora. Our marriage ceremonies are all Roman—the ring, the veil, the wedding gifts, the groomsmen and bridesmaids, the bride-cake. Our funeral images and customs are Roman—the cypress and the yew, the flowers strewn upon graves, the black for mourning. The lucky days of a century ago were the "dies albi" of the Romans, and the unlucky the "dies atri." If we ask why we say, "God bless you," to a sneezer, we only ask a question which Pliny asked, and perform a ceremony which even the stern Tiberius thought it necessary to perform. If we laugh at the credulous fancy of the simple maiden, who, when her ears tingle, says that a distant one is talking of her, we must recollect that the Romans believed in some influence of a mesmeric nature which produced the same effect. We have faith in odd numbers, as Virgil records the faith, "Numero Deus impare gaudet." "A screech-owl at midnight," says Addison, "has alarmed a family more than a band of robbers." The terror was traditionary. "The bird of night" was an evil bird, and no Roman superstition entered more completely into the popular belief, and was more referred to by the historians and the poets. Indications such as these of the influence of the obscure past may be as trustworthy records as half-obliterated inscriptions. They enable us to piece out a passage or two in the history of a people.—KNIGHT'S *Popular History of England.*

To sum up all, then, the occupation of Britain by the Romans was like the French colonization of Algeria, with the difference of a long tenure. The government was military and municipal; the conquerors unsympathetic and hard. But the peace which they enforced favored commerce, and the mines which they developed were prolific in salt, iron, tin, and lead. They burned coal where wood was scanty in the north, and in one instance carried a mine under water. Under Julian (A.D. 358) eight hundred vessels were employed in the corn trade between the English coasts and the Roman colonies on the Rhine. Before Cæsar's time even the beech and the fir had been unknown in our forests; and the apple, the nut, and the raspberry were, probably, the chief of our native fruits. The better half of our common trees, from the cherry to the chestnut, are of Roman origin; the vine and the fig-tree were introduced, and maintained themselves; the pea, the radish, and other common vegetables, were then added to the garden; and it is even possible that to Rome we owe the rose, the lily, and the pæony. The mule and pigeon followed the track of the legions. Yet a country life was not that to which the colonist generally inclined. He was rather a dweller in towns, a trader, and a builder, and he scattered cities broadcast over the island. The splendor of Roman remains attracted attention in the twelfth century, when the grass was growing over them, and generations had already quarried in them

for homes. Above all, those numerous cities had been centers of Roman polity and law. These influences can hardly be overrated, nor can it be doubted that many of them remained, and even gathered strength, where all seemed to be swept away. For good or for evil, England was henceforth a part of the European commonwealth of nations; sharing that commerce for want of which Ireland remained barbarous; sharing the alliance for disregarding which the Saxon dynasty perished; penetrated by ideas which have connected the people in every historical struggle—crusades and French wars—with the sympathies of other men.—PEARSON'S *History of England.*

To complete our review of the Roman period let us note some of the entries in that curious record of early events, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which is, with the exception of Bæda's Ecclesiastical History, the source whence nearly all English chroniclers, until after the Norman conquest, chiefly derived their information:—

Before the incarnation of Christ sixty years, Caius Julius, the emperor, first of the Romans sought the land of Britain; and he crushed the Britons in battle, and overcame them; and nevertheless he was unable to gain any empire there.

A.D. 1. Octavianus reigned fifty-six years; and in the forty-second year of his reign Christ was born.

A.D. 47. This year Claudius, King of the Romans, went with an army into Britain, and subdued the island, and subjected all the Picts and Welsh to the rule of the Romans.

A.D. 48. In this year there was a very severe famine.

A.D. 49. This year Nero began to reign.

A.D. 81. This year Titus succeeded to the empire, after Vespasian; he who said that he had lost the day on which he had done no good.

A.D. 167. This year Eleutherius obtained the bishopric of Rome, and held it in great glory for twelve years. To him Lucius, King of Britain, sent letters, praying that he might be made a Christian; and he fulfilled that he requested. And he afterward continued in the right faith till the reign of Diocletian.

A.D. 189. Here Severus obtained the empire, and reigned seventeen years. He begirt Britain with a ditch from sea to sea, and then ended his days at York; and Bassianus, his son, succeeded to the empire.

A.D. 286. This year St. Alban, the martyr, suffered.

A.D. 381. This year Maximus, the emperor, obtained the empire; he was born in the land of Britain. . . . In these days the heresy of Pelagius arose throughout the world.

A.D. 409. This year the Goths took the city of Rome by storm, and after this the Romans never ruled in Britain; and this was about eleven hundred and ten years after it had been built. Altogether they ruled in Britain four hundred and seventy years since Caius Julius first sought the land.

A.D. 418. This year the Romans collected all the treasures that were in Britain, and some they hid in the earth, so that no one has since been able to find them, and some they carried with them into Gaul.

A.D. 443. This year the Britons sent over the sea to Rome, and begged for

help against the Picts: but they had none, because they were themselves warring against Attila, King of the Huns. And then they sent to the Angles, and entreated the like of the ethelings of the Angles.

A.D. 449. This year Martiannus and Valentinus succeeded to the empire, and reigned seven years. And in their days Hengist and Horsa, invited by Wyrtgeorne.* king of the Britons, landed in Britain on the shore which is called Ypwines-fleet; at first in aid of the Britons, but afterward they fought against them. King Wyrtgeorne gave them land in the south-east of this country on condition that they should fight against the Picts. Then they fought against the Picts, and had the victory wheresoever they came. They then sent to the Angles, desired a larger force to be sent, and caused them to be told the worthlessness of the Britons, and the excellences of the land. Then they soon sent hither a larger force in aid of the others. At that time there came men from three tribes of Germany, from the old Saxons, from the Angles, and from the Jutes. From the Jutes came the Kentishmen and the men of Wight, that is, the tribe which now dwells in Wight, and that race among the West Saxons which is still called the race of Jutes. From the old Saxons came the men of Essex and Sussex and Wessex. From Anglis, which has ever since remained waste between the Jutes and the Saxons, came the men of East Anglia, Middle Anglia, Mercia, and all Northhumbria. Their leaders were two brothers, Hengist and Horsa; they were sons of Wihtgils: Wihtgils son of Witta, Witta of Wecta, Wecta of Woden; from this Woden sprang all the royal families, and those of the Southumbrians also.

Readers who desire a closer acquaintance with the history and spirit of this early period of English history will get much help from the following sources:—

I.—FOR HISTORICAL STUDY.

Edward Freeman's "Old English History;" Wright's "Celt, Roman, and Saxon;" Disraeli's "Britain and the Britons."

No student should overlook "Six Old English Chronicles." This book contains, among other chronicles, Geoffrey Monmouth's "History of the British Kings."

Knight's "Popular History of England" may be recommended to the general reader. See also Hume for this period.

The first two chapters of Macaulay give a brilliant summary of the early periods of English history.

II.—COLLATERAL READING.

Shakspeare's "King Lear;" Wordsworth's "Artegal and Elidure;" Shakspeare's "Cymbeline;" Beaumont and Fletcher's "Tragedy of Bonduca."

GUIDE OUTLINE FOR KING LEAR.

I. Read Geoffrey Monmouth's "Story of King Lear." This will be found among the selections given under the Anglo-Norman period of literature.

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* Vortigern.

II. Read the following selections from Shakspeare's "King Lear:" Act I, scenes 1 and 2; Act IV, scene 1.

In reading these selections the chief points to be observed are:—

1. That by virtue of such description as that of the Dover Cliff in Act. IV, the idea of *place* is made definite—the *scene* is Britain.

2. That the *time* was in a very early age, when men believed that their destinies were ruled by the stars: Act I, scene 2. The *period* is far back of the Roman time.

3. In the first scene we are introduced to an ancient British king—a heathen monarch, who swears by Jupiter and Apollo:—

> "By the sacred radiance of the sun;
> The mysteries of Hecate and the night;
> By all the operations of the orbs
> From whom we do exist and cease to be."

King Lear and his people were *pagans.*

4. The national history is closely identified with the domestic troubles of this pagan king. When Lear's "against his child" the whole nation is convulsed; "machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders" follow.—Act I, scene 2. *Domestic discord* in this pagan land was *civil war.*

III. The chief interest of the drama centers in King Lear, a self-willed despot, an unnatural father, whose moral nature was redeemed in a heathen age.

Read carefully and thoughtfully the story of his life, and, keeping in view the points considered under general division II, note also the following:—

1. That the restoration of his better nature was effected in a twofold way—by the ministry of sorrow and the gentle mediation of that daughter whom he had "dowered with his curse and strangered with his oath."

2. That the sayings of the "fool" constitute a sort of running commentary on the acts of King Lear.

3. Compare Lear at the beginning of the drama with Lear at the close of it.

4. Observe that Shakspeare deviated from history in not giving Lear his crown "again after three years."

ARTEGAL AND ELIDURE.

The legend of Artegal and Elidure, like that of King Lear, belongs to a remote and uncertain period. It is a simple story of fraternal affection, and is well told by Wordsworth.

CYMBELINE.

In reading Cymbeline, observe:—

1. That the *period* is made definite—there is intercourse between Britain and other parts of the world.

2. That Shakspeare represents the Britons as retaining a certain degree of independence, while, on the other hand, he shows that the Roman influence was felt in many ways; see particularly Act III, scene 1.

3. In the Romans of the play he shows the low state of morals among the Roman people of these times.

4. The ideas and manners of the Britons are in harmony with the imperfect condition of civilization.

5. Shakspeare has adorned this period of British history with one of the loveliest of his female characters—Imogen.

CHAPTER II.

CELTIC LITERATURE.

It is only through a right understanding of its national literature that we are able to comprehend the mind of a nation. History shows the form of its outer body, but literature tells its inner life. The island of Britain is the center of a great nation. It has been watered with the blood of the Celt and the Saxon; it has been furrowed by the sword of the Dane and the Norman; it has been swept by the winds and tempests of revolutions; it has felt the quickening power of the Reformation; it has known such a bloom and fruitage of poesy as nowhere else enriches the literature of a European nation; it has been the birth-place of great and good men who have done great and noble deeds. History tells us of these things in systematic form: it gives a record of the events, the deeds, and the dates; but "literature brings to us, yet warm with their first heat, the appetite and passions, the keen intellectual debate, the higher promptings of the soul, whose blended energies produced the substance of the record."* Let us seek, then, through a right study of its literature, an interpretation of all that is best in the life and character of the English nation.

There is always an intimate relation between the literature of a people and all their conditions of life. The early history of Britain is the history of a series of desperate wars, mainly disastrous to the Celts. The common woes and needs of life were foremost in their thoughts. Songs of war were their chief literature, and they sing of men whose "blood washed all their arms" ere they fell in the fight.

The oldest manuscript specimens of Celtic literature belong to the close of the eighth century; but each of the two branches of the Celts—the Gael and the Cymry—has a more ancient literature, of which some fragments have come down to us by tradition. These fragments—often ending abruptly—as if the singers had died with the unfinished songs on their lips, consist chiefly of accounts of battles, panegyrics of warriors, and laments for

* Prof. Morley's "First Sketch of English Literature," p. 1.

the dead. They are especially characterized by the detailed description they give of the personal appearance, dress, and arms of the chief actors, by a frequent use of bold metaphor and effective simile, and by an almost entire absence of descriptions of scenery. The oldest Celtic poems contain little notice of woman or love. This absence of passion and tenderness is especially noticeable in all the early poems of the Cymry. The Celt's delight in bright color is strongly marked in the old Gaelic poems. In the tale of the "Tain Bo" we have a picture bright with mingled color; men are marching; "some are with red cloaks; others with light blue cloaks; others with green, or gray, or white, or yellow cloaks, bright and fluttering about them. There is a young red-freckled lad, with a crimson cloak in their midst, a golden brooch in that cloak at his breast."

Other peculiarities of the old Celtic poems, which cannot escape the attention of the careful reader, are the brevity of the narrative, the impulsive and careless boldness of the actors, the great energy of the action, and the fierce exultation of the slaughter. It will be observed also that the ideas and manners are in harmony with the pagan age.

The following sketch of the two periods of the traditional literature of the Celts is from Professor Morley's "First Sketch of English Literature:"—

We have in this country two famous traditional periods of Celtic literature. One belongs to the Gael, the other to the Cymry; and each centers in a battle.

About the Battle of Gabhra,* said to have been fought A.D. 284, is gathered the main body of old Gaelic tradition. Fionn, (which means "Fair-haired,") the son of Cumhaill, known in modern poetry as Fingal, had a son Oisin, (which means "The Little Fawn,") who is known in modern poetry as Ossian. Fionn's father, Cumhaill, had been slain in battle by Goll Mac Morna, who, as Fionn's mortal enemy, and afterward his friend, has an important place in the old traditions. Fionn led one of the four bands into which the Gaels were parted, that of Leinster, known as the Clanna Baoisgne. His clan attained to so much power that the other three combined against it, and then Fionn and his family had to fight for their lives against all the forces of Erin armed against them, except those of his friend the King of Munster. Stirred to the depths by a struggle that compelled them to put out all strength in the defense of what they held most dear, they felt keenly, reached the highest level of the life of their own time, and poured its music out in song. Fionn's cousin, Caeilte Mac Ronan, was warrior and bard. Oisin, the son of Fionn, was warrior and bard. The brother of Oisin, Fergus the Eloquent, (Fergus Finnbheoil,) was chief bard, and bard only.

More or less changed by time, some fragments of the singing of these men remain on the lips of country folks among the Scotch and Irish Gaels. Only eleven

* Pronounced Gavvhra or Gawra.

of them are to be found in records older than the fifteenth century; but others were collected from the lips of the people by a Dean of Lismore in Argyllshire, before the days of Queen Elizabeth.

Of the old Gaelic poems and histories Ireland has many remains, such as the tale of "The Battle of Moytura," and the "Tain Bo, or Cattle Plunder of Chualgne." In the "Senchus Mor" are ancient laws of Ireland, ascribed sometimes to the third century, sometimes to the fifth, and certainly known as ancient in the days of Alfred. But the chief feature in old Gaelic literature is the development of song during the struggle that ended a year after the death of Fionn in the crushing of his tribe at the battle of Gabhra, which is said to have been fought in the year 284.

Oisin is said to have had a warrior son, Oscar, killed in the battle, and to have himself survived to an extreme old age, saddened by change of times. The name of Oisin was even blended in tradition with that of St. Patrick, who came to Ireland about a century and a half after the battle of Gabhra. Patrick is made to say to Oisin, "It is better for thee to be with me and the clergy, as thou art, than to be with Fionn and the Fenians, for they are in hell without order of release;" to which Oisin is made to answer, "By the book and its meaning, by thy crosier and by thine image, better were it for me to share their torments than to be among the clergy continually talking. . . . Son of Alphinen of the Wise Words, woe is me that I am near the clergy of the bells! For a time I lived with Caeilte, and then we were not poor."

The flowering of the other branch of our old Celtic literature—the Cymric—is associated also with a struggle that brought out the noblest life of men touched to the quick and concentrating all their powers for defense of home and liberty. Here also was a struggle against overwhelming force, closed with a ruinous defeat in battle. This was the battle of Cattraeth, said to have been fought in the year 570 by confederate Cymry, to resist the advance of the Teuton inland, after the last of the six settlements upon our eastern shores. They were, indeed, men of the sixth settlement, who had landed, A. D. 547, in the north-east, under Ida, and then spread from the sea inland across a part of the land we now call Northumberland, Durham, and Yorkshire. They took certain lands of the Gododin, (Otadini of the Romans.) which the Cymry made a last great effort to wrest from them. The scene of battle was probably Catterick Bridge, a few miles from Richmond, in Yorkshire. The Cymric tribes were gathered at the call of the Lord of Eiddin, which means, perhaps, not Edinburgh, but the region of the river Eden, flowing from a source near that of the Swale, through Westmoreland and Cumberland, into the Solway Frith. They came from districts now known by such names as Dumbarton, Wigtown, Kirkcudbright, and Ayr, from Morecambe Bay and all surrounding regions, gathered their force on the hills about the sources of the Eden and the Swale, and thence marched (A.D. 570) down through Swaledale, some five and twenty miles, to Catterick, or Cattraeth. Aneurin, one of the chief of the bards inspired by the great life-struggle, sang the disasters of the battle in a poem called the "Gododin," of which ninety-seven stanzas yet remain. Gray found in a translation of it the passage which he thus puts into music of his own:—

"To Cattraeth's vale in glittering row
Twice two hundred warriors go;
Every warrior's manly neck
Chains of regal honor deck,

Wreathed in many a golden link:
From the golden cup they drink
Nectar that the bees produce,
Or the grape's ecstatic juice.
Flush'd with mirth and hope they burn;
But none from Cattraeth's vale return,
Save Aeron brave, and Conan strong,
(Bursting through the bloody throng,)
And I, the meanest of them all,
That live to weep and sing their fall."

The battle began on a Tuesday, and continued for a week. The Cymry fought to the death, and of three hundred and sixty-three chiefs who had led their people to the conflict, only three, says Aneurin, besides himself, survived. "Morien lifted up again his ancient lance, and, roaring, stretching out death toward the warriors, while toward the lovely, slender, blood-stained body of Gwen, sighed Gwenabwy, the only son of Gwen. . . . Fain would I sing, 'Would that Morien had not died.' I sigh for Gwenabwy the son of Gwen." Thus Aneurin ends his plaint over the crowning triumph of the Teuton. But hearts had beaten high among the Cymry, and from souls astir song had been poured throughout the days of long resistance that had come before. Urien was the great North-of-England chief who led the battle of the Cymry for their homes and liberties against invading Angles. Llywarch the Old, (Llywarch Hen,) Prince of Argoed, whom the remains of verse ascribed to him show to have been first in genius among the Cymric bards, was Urien's friend and fellow-combatant at Lindisfarne, between the years 572 and 579. There, after the death of Urien, he carried the chief's head in his mantle from the field. "The head," he sang, "that I carry carried me; I shall find it no more; it will come no more to my succor. Woe to my hand, my happiness is lost!" After Urien's death Llywarch joined arms with Cyndyllan, Prince of Powys, at his capital, where Shrewsbury now stands. Cyndyllan fell in a battle at Tarn, near the Wrekin. "The hall of Cyndyllan," then sang his friend Llywarch, "is gloomy this night, without fire, without songs—tears afflict the cheeks! The hall of Cyndyllan is gloomy this night, without fire, without family—my overflowing tears gush out! The hall of Cyndyllan pierces me to see it, roofless, fireless. My chief is dead, and I alive myself." Twelfth century tradition says that this bard was for a time one of King Arthur's counselors. Llywarch had many sons; he gave to all of them his heart to battle for their country, and lost them all upon the battle-field. "O, Gwenn," he sang of his youngest and last dead, "O, Gwenn, woe to him who is too old, since he has lost you. A man was my son, a hero, a generous warrior, and he was the nephew of Urien. Gwenn has been slain at the ford of Morlas. . . . Sweetly sang a bird on a pear-tree above the head of Gwenn before they covered him with the turf. That broke the heart of the old Llywarch."

Taliesin (Shining Forehead) was another of those Cymric bards, who sang in the hall of Urien. He was bard only, chief bard, and sang Urien's victories over Ida at Argoed, at Gwenn Estrad, and at Menao, between the years 547 and 560. After the death of Urien, he was the bard of Urien's son, Owain, by whom Ida was slain. After the death of all Urien's sons, Taliesin ended a sad life in Wales, and was buried, it is said, under a cairn near Aberystwith.

Myrddhin, or Merlin, was another of these bards, the one who became afterward one of the chief figures in Arthurian romance. He was born between the years

470 and 480; served first the British chief Ambrosius Aurelianus, from whom he took the name of Ambrose before his own name of Merlin; then served as bard with Arthur, leader of the Southern Britons. That was the King Arthur who fought as Urien fought, and who, though seldom named in our oldest Cymric remains, became afterward typical hero of the contest, Arthur, the king of that heroic myth which runs through our literature, and is made part of the life of England. Merlin, one day, between the years 560 and 574, in a field of slaughter on the Solway Firth, lost reason at sight of the miseries and horrors that surrounded him, broke his sword, and fled the society of man. Thenceforth he poured lament through all his music, and at last he was found dead by the banks of a river. Of other bards the memories survive, but these were the chief; and if the records of their lives be blended with much fable, they do, nevertheless, retain truths out of the life of that great time of effervescence which preceded in this country a blending of the elements of English strength.

Influence of the Celt on English literature proceeds not from example set by one people and followed by another, but in the way of nature, by establishment of blood relationship, and the transmission of modified and blended character to a succeeding generation.

The pure Gael—now represented by the Irish and Scotch Celts—was, at his best, an artist. He had a sense of literature, he had active and bold imagination, joy in bright color, skill in music, touches of a keen sense of honor in most savage times, and in religion fervent and self-sacrificing zeal. In the Cymry—now represented by the Celts of Wales—there was the same artist nature. By natural difference, and partly, no doubt, because their first known poets learned in suffering what they taught in song, the oldest Cymric music comes to us, not like the music of the Irish harp, in throbbings of a pleasant tunefulness, but as a wail that beats again, again, and again some iterated burden on the ear.

CELTIC POETRY.

The following poems are from Cassell's "Library of English Literature," edited by Professor Morley. He tells us that the "Death of Oscar" is from a collection of old Gaelic poems made by Sir James M'Gregor, in the early part of the sixteenth century. In this poem the bard, Fergus Finnbheoil, sings of the slaughter of the "Feinn of Britain," at the battle of Gabhra, and the death of Oscar, Oisin's son.

THE DEATH OF OSCAR.

"Say, Bard of the Feinn of Erin,
How fared the fight, Fergus, my son,
In Gabhra's fierce battle-day? Say!"

"The fight fared not well, son of Cumhaill,
From Gabhra come tidings of ruin,
For Oscar the fearless is slain.
The sons of Caeilte were seven;
They fell with the Feinn of Alvin.

The youth of the Feinn are fallen,
Are dead in their battle array.
And dead on the field lies MacLuy,
With six of the sons of thy sire.
The young men of Alvin are fallen;
The Feinn of Britain are fallen.
And dead is the king's son of Lochlin,
Who hastened to war for our right—
The king's son with a heart ever open,
And arm ever strong in the fight."

"Now, O Bard—my son's son, my desire,
My Oscar, of him, Fergus, tell
How he hewed at the helms ere he fell."

"Hard were it, Fionn, to number,
Heavy for me were the labor,
To tell of the host that has fallen,
Slain by the valor of Oscar.
No rush of the waterfall swifter,
No pounce of the hawk on his prey,
No whirlpool more sweeping and deadly,
Than Oscar in battle that day.
And you who last saw him could see
How he throbbed in the roar of the fray,
As a storm-worried leaf on the tree
Whose fellows lie fallen below,
As an aspen will quiver and sway
While the axe deals it blow upon blow.
When he saw that MacArt, King of Erin,
Still lived in the midst of the roar,
Oscar gathered his force to roll on him
As waves roll to break on the shore.
The King's son, Cairbar, saw the danger,
He shook his great hungering spear,
Grief of griefs! drove its point through our Oscar,
Who braved the death-stroke without fear.
Rushing still on MacArt, King of Erin,
His weight on his weapon he threw,
And smote at MacArt, and again smote
Cairbar, whom that second stroke slew.
So died Oscar, a king in his glory.
I, Fergus the Bard, grieve my way
Through all lands, saying how went the story
Of Gabhra's fierce battle-day." "Say!"

The following poem is one of the ninety-seven stanzas of the Gododin, the most important fragment of the oldest Cymric literature :—

THE GODODIN.

I.

A man in thought, a boy in form,
He stoutly fought, and sought the storm
Of flashing war that thundered far.
His courser lank and swift, thick-maned,
Bore on his flank, as on he strained,
The light-brown shield—as on he sped,
With golden spur, in cloak of fur,
His blue sword gleaming. Be there said
No word of mine that does not hold thee dear!
Before thy youth had tasted bridal cheer
The red Death was thy bride! The ravens feed
On thee, yet straining to the front, to lead.
Owain, the friend I loved, is dead!
Woe is it that on him the ravens feed!

II.

Wreathed, he led his rustic heroes;
In his home the friend of maidens,
Pouring out the mead before them.
When the shout of war rang out,
Spear-dents were large on the front of his targe;
He gave no quarter, chased for slaughter,
Swift to mow as grass the foe,
Unstained he disdained to return.
Of a hundred rustic heroes,
Homeward to his coast of Mordei,
To the wave-washed land that bore them,
Madog saw but one return.

III.

Wreathed, hard-toiling, strength of many,
Like an eagle swooping to us
When allured to join our band.
High upraised and brave his banner;
Higher, braver, mood and manner;
Eagle-mind that feared not any
Of the warriors trooping to us,
Flocking from Gododin land.
Manawyd, thou swift and fearless,
By no foeman's spear delayed;
Foemen's tents through thee are cheerless;
None evade thy spearmen's raid.

IV.

Wreathed the leader wolf came forth;
Amber rings his temple twine,
Amber worth a feast of wine.

The youth of the Feinn are fallen,
Are dead in their battle array.
And dead on the field lies MacLuy,
With six of the sons of thy sire.
The young men of Alvin are fallen;
The Feinn of Britain are fallen.
And dead is the king's son of Lochlin,
Who hastened to war for our right—
The king's son with a heart ever open,
And arm ever strong in the fight."

"Now, O Bard—my son's son, my desire,
My Oscar, of him, Fergus, tell
How he hewed at the helms ere he fell."

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Heavy for me were the labor,
To tell of the host that has fallen,
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No rush of the waterfall swifter,
No pounce of the hawk on his prey,
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And you who last saw him could see
How he throbbed in the roar of the fray,
As a storm-worried leaf on the tree
Whose fellows lie fallen below,
As an aspen will quiver and sway
While the axe deals it blow upon blow.
When he saw that MacArt, King of Erin,
Still lived in the midst of the roar,
Oscar gathered his force to roll on him
As waves roll to break on the shore.
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He shook his great hungering spear,
Grief of griefs! drove its point through our Oscar,
Who braved the death-stroke without fear.
Rushing still on MacArt, King of Erin,
His weight on his weapon he threw,
And smote at MacArt, and again smote
Cairbar, whom that second stroke slew.
So died Oscar, a king in his glory.
I, Fergus the Bard, grieve my way
Through all lands, saying how went the story
Of Gabhra's fierce battle-day." "Say!"

The following poem is one of the ninety-seven stanzas of the Gododin, the most important fragment of the oldest Cymric literature :—

By a bride from the tribe of the Bryneich! But no;
He scorned to take dowry from hands of the foe,
And I, all unhurt, lost a friend in the fight,
Whom the wrath of a father felled down for the slight.

X.

The warriors marched to Cattraeth with the dawn;
They feared them who met them with martial uproar;
A host on a handful to battle were drawn,
Broad mark for the lances that drenched them in gore.
The shock of the battle, before the brave band
Of the nobles who freely obeyed his command,
Mynyddawg, Friend of Heroes, was bold to withstand.

XI.

The warriors marched to Cattraeth with the dawn;
The loved ones lamented in masterless tents;
A snare had the sweet yellow mead round them drawn.
That dark year full often the minstrel laments;
Red plumes, redder swords, broken blades, helmets cleft,
Even those of the band that obeyed thy command,
Mynyddawg, Friend of Heroes, of heroes bereft.

XII.

The warriors marched to Cattraeth with the day;
Base taunts shamed the greatest of battles. They cried,
As their blades slew the baptized Gelorwydd, "Away
With your kindred, the homeless, the dead, to abide!
For the Gem of the Baptized behold we provide—
We, the host of Gododin—an unction of blood;
A last unction is due ere the last fight is fought."
Should the might of true chiefs not be mastered with thought?

XIII.

The warrior marched to Cattraeth with the day;
In the stillness of the night he had quaffed the white mead.
He was wretched, though prophesied glory and sway
Had winged his ambition. Were none there to lead
To Cattraeth with a loftier hope in their speed.
Secure in his boast, he would scatter the host,
Bold standard in hand; no other such band
Went from Eiddin as his, that would rescue the land
From the troops of the ravagers. Far from the sight
Of home that was dear to him, ere he too perished,
Tudvwlch Hir slew the Saxons in seven days' fight.
He owed not the freedom of life to his might,
But dear is his memory where he was cherished.
When Tudvwlch amain came that post to maintain
By the son of Kilydd, the blood covered the plain.

XIV.

The warriors marched to Cattraeth with the dawn;
Their shields were no shelter; in shining array
They sought blood. On their front the war thundered, its din
Crashed resounding from targets. When he would repay
The fickle and base for their fealty withdrawn,
The mailed chief of the Mordei his high hand could slay;
The homage they owed him his iron could win;
For a host before Erthai would flinch in dismay.

XV.

When the bards tell the tale of the fight at Cattraeth,
The bereaved ones will sigh, as they sighed through the years
Of the mourning for warriors gone to their death,
For lands left without leaders to ruin and tears.
The fair band of his sons on his bier bore afar
Godebog, whose sword plowed the long furrows of war.
And shall Cyvwlch the Tall, and Tudvwlch, now no more
Quaff sweet mead under torches? Just fate we deplore:
For the sweetness of mead,
In the day of our need,
Is our bitterness: blunts all our arms for the strife;
Is a friend to the lip and a foe to the life.

XVI.

In other days he frowned on Eching fort,
To him the young and bold pressed ever near;
In other days on Bludwe he would sport,
While his glad horn for Mordei made good cheer.
In other days he blended mead and ale;
In other days purple and gold he wore;
In other days Gwarthlev—"the Voice of Blame"—
Hero deserving of a truer name—
Had stall-fed steeds, who safely, swiftly bore
Their master out of peril. These now fail.
In other days he turned the ebbing tide,
And bade the flood of war sweep high, spread wide.

XVII.

Light of lights—the sun,
Leader of the day,
First to rise and run
His appointed way,
Crowned with many a ray,
Seeks the British sky;
Sees the flight's dismay,
Sees the Briton fly.
The horn in Eiddin's hall
Had sparkled with the wine,

And thither, at the call
To drink and be divine,
He went, to share the feast
Of reapers, wine and mead;
He drank and so increased
His daring for wild deed.
The reapers sang of war
That lifts its shining wings,
Its shining wings of fire,
Its shields that flutter far.
The bards too sang of war,
Of plumed and crested war;
The song rose ever higher.
Not a shield
Escapes the shock,
To the field
They fiercely flock,
There to fall.
But of all
Who struck on giant Gwrveling,
Whom he would he struck again,
All he struck in grave were lain
Ere the bearers came to bring
To his grave stout Gwrveling.

XVIII.

These gathered from the lands around:
Three chiefs from the Novantine ground:
Five times five hundred men, embattled bands,
Three times three hundred levied from their lands;
Three hundred men of battle, armed in gold,
From Eiddin; then three cuirassed hosts enrolled
By three kings golden-chained: three chiefs beside
With whom three hundred marched in equal pride;
Three of like mark, and jealous each of each,
Fierce in attack and dreadful in the breach,
Would strike a lion dead; with gold they shone.
Three kings came from the Brython, Cynrig one,
And Cynon and Cynrain from Aeron,
To breast the darts the sullen Deivyr throw.
Better than Cynon came from Brython none,
He proved a deadly serpent to the foe.

XIX.

I drank the Mordei's wine and mead;
Spears were many, men prepared
For the banquet, sadly shared,
The solemn feast where eagles feed.
When Cydywal to battle sped,
In the green dawn, he raised a shout

Triumphant over many dead.
Upon the field were strown about
The shields he splintered, tearing spears
Hewn and cast down. His were no fears;
Son of the star-wise Syvno, he
Knew that his death that day should be
By spear or bow, not by sword-blade,
And not a sword his havoc stayed
Or could against his sword a strife sustain.
He gave his own life, took a host;
Blaen Gwynedd knew his ancient boast
Of the brave toilers piled whom he had slain.

XX.

I drank the Mordei's wine and mead,
I drank, and now for that I bleed,
And yield me to the stroke of pain
With yearning throb of high disdain,
That upward pants to strike again.
Thee too the sword that slays me slays.
When danger threatens us, the days
Of evil-doing quail the hand:
Had we withstood we could withstand.
Presynt was bold, through war's alarm
He thrust his way with doughty arm.

XXI.

To Cattraeth's vale in glittering row
Twice two hundred warriors go;
Every warrior's manly neck
Chains of regal honor deck,
Wreathed in many a golden link:
From the golden cup they drink
Nectar that the bees produce,
Or the grape's ecstatic juice.
Flushed with mirth and hope they burn:
But none from Cattraeth's vale return,
Save Aeron brave and Conan strong,
(Bursting through the bloody throng,)
And I, the meanest of them all,
That live to weep, and sing their fall.

CHAPTER III.

THE SAXON PERIOD. 449 A. D. TO 1066 A. D.

I. The Saxon Conquest of Britain.

GUIDE ANALYSIS.

I. THE SAXON INVASION.
   1. Mythical character of the British and Anglo-Saxon legends.
   2. Kingdoms founded by the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons: seven prominent among others, called the Saxon Heptarchy.
   3. The history of Arthur.
   4. Extermination of the Britons.
   5. Supremacy of the Bretwaldas.

II. RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT SAXONS.

III. THE SPIRITUAL CONQUEST OF BRITAIN.
   1. Gregory the Great.
   2. Augustine's mission.
   3. Augustine and Ethelbert.
   4. Christianity introduced into Northumbria.
   5. The effects of the conversion of the Saxons.

IV. THE SEVENTH AND EIGHTH CENTURIES.

V. EGBERT, AND THE FORMATION OF ENGLAND.

I. THE SAXON INVASION.

THE story of the first Saxon settlement in Britain rests on uncertain Saxon and British traditions. The Welsh account tells us that Vortigern, for love of the yellow-haired Rowena—the sister of Hengist—yielded up the province of Kent to her brothers. The Britons rose in anger and defeated the Saxons, 300,000 strong, slaying Horsa, and driving them out of the island. Another story says that the Saxons, under the command of Hengist and Horsa, successfully warred against the Picts and Scots; but, attracted by the beauty of the country, they turned their arms against the Britons, and seized Kent. The traditional narrative of the conquest, as contained in the English chronicles,* is more simple. Vortigern called over the ethelings Hengist and Horsa, who came with their followers. The Teutonic warriors successfully repelled the enemies of the Britons; but as fresh bands from the German coast poured into the country to swell the ranks of their countrymen, the Britons became alarmed, and withheld provisions. The Saxons then united themselves with the Picts, and "ravaged the nearest cities and countries, from the east sea to the west." The land was then divided among the conquerors, the Jutes taking Kent and the Isle of Wight, the Angles, Anglia; and the Saxons, Essex and Wessex.

* Bede gives substantially the same account. E. H., lib. 1, c. 15.

These traditional and romantic accounts do not affect the general narrative of the conquest. By the end of the sixth century the Teutons had established the several kingdoms in Britain which have been erroneously called the Saxon Heptarchy. Of these *seven* kingdoms Mr. Freeman says:—

The old notion of a heptarchy, of a regular system of seven kingdoms, united under the regular supremacy of a single overlord, is a dream which has passed away before the light of historic criticism. The English kingdoms in Britain were ever fluctuating, alike in their number and in their relations to one another. The number of perfectly independent States was sometimes greater and sometimes less than the mystical seven, and till the beginning of the ninth century the whole nation did not admit the regular supremacy of any fixed and permanent overlord. Yet it is no less certain that, among the mass of smaller and more obscure principalities, seven kingdoms do stand out in a marked way, seven kingdoms of which it is possible to recover something like a continuous history, seven kingdoms which alone supplied candidates for the dominion of the whole island.

The following were the kingdoms of the so-called heptarchy:—

Kingdom.	Extent.	Founder.	Date.
1. Kent	Modern Kent	Hengist	A. D. 457
2. Sussex	Sussex and Surrey	Ella	490
3. Wessex	Counties west of Sussex and south of the Thames, excepting Cornwall	Cerdic	519
4. Essex	Essex, Middlesex, and a part of Hertfordshire	Ercenwin	527
5. Northumbria	North of the Humber to the Forth	Ida	547
6. East Anglia	Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridge	Uffa	575
7. Mercia	All the Midland Counties	Cridda	582

The Britons fought bravely for their hearths and homes, and the struggle was neither short nor bloodless.

"Three warriors, and threescore, and three hundred
Went to the tumult at Cattraeth.
Of those that hastened
To the bearers of the mead,
Except three, none returned."

Many such tumults attended the establishment of the Saxon dominion, and it was in one of these ineffectual wars that the British King Arthur is said to have made a brilliant struggle against the Pagan barbarians.

Arthur was the British chieftain who so long resisted the progress of Cerdic. The unparalleled celebrity which this Briton has attained, in his own country and elsewhere, both in history and romance, might be allowed to exalt our estimation of the Saxon chief who maintained his invasion though an Arthur opposed him, if the British hero had not himself been unduly magnified into an incredible and inconsistent conqueror.

The authentic actions of Arthur have been so disfigured by the additions of the minstrels and of Jeffry, that many writers have denied that he ever lived: but

this is an extreme as objectionable as the romances which occasioned it. The tales that all human perfection was collected in Arthur; that giants and kings who never existed, and nations which he never saw, were subdued by him; that he went to Jerusalem for the sacred cross; or that he not only excelled the experienced past, but also the possible future, we may, if we please, recollect only to despise; but when all such fictions are removed, and those incidents only are retained which the sober criticism of history sanctions with its approbation, a fame ample enough to interest the judicious, and to perpetuate his honorable memory, will still continue to claim our belief and applause.—SHARON TURNER'S *History of the Anglo-Saxons.*

The Britons who refused to yield to the Saxon invaders were driven to the west of the island. In Cambria, or Wales, the noblest of the Cymry found refuge and maintained their independence. The Saxons more than once invaded their country; but though they were compelled to render tribute to the Anglo-Saxon kings, they would neither conform to the Saxon customs nor the Saxon laws. Other Britons fled beyond the sea to Armorica; and some are even said to have passed into Holland. Those who remained behind lost all trace of national power, and were reduced to vassalage. The common belief that the Britons were suddenly and almost completely exterminated seems to have little foundation in history. Some of our best historians, however, hold this belief. Of the extent of their extermination Mr. Freeman writes:—

In short, though the utter extirpation of a nation is an impossibility,* there is every reason to believe that the Celtic inhabitants of those parts of Britain which had become English at the end of the sixth century had been as nearly extirpated as a nation can be. The women would doubtless be largely spared,† but, as far as the male sex is concerned, we may feel sure that death, emigration, or personal slavery were the only alternatives which the vanquished found at the hands of our fathers. The nature of the small Celtic element in our language would of itself prove the fact. Nearly every Welsh word which has found its way into English expresses some small domestic matter, such as women and slaves would be concerned with; nearly all the words belonging to the nobler occupations, all the terms of government and war, and nearly all the terms of agriculture, are thoroughly Teutonic. In short, every-where but in Britain an intruding nation sat down by the side of an elder nation, and gradually lost itself in its mass. In Britain, so far as such a process is possible, the intruding nation altogether sup-

* I mean the extirpation of any thing worthy to be called a nation, of any people who had attained the position to which all the inhabitants of the Roman Empire had attained. The dying out of savage tribes before the arts and arms of highly civilized Europeans is another matter.—FREEMAN.

† Yet the legend of Hengist's daughter, as told by Nennius—her name, Rowena, is a later absurdity—absolutely worthless as a piece of personal history, seems to point to the fact that the invaders brought their women with them, at least to some considerable extent.—FREEMAN.

planted the older nation. The process of the Conquest again, its gradual character, the way in which the land was won, bit by bit, by hard fighting, was of itself widely different from the Gothic settlements in Italy or Spain. This peculiar character of the English Conquest would of itself favor the complete displacement of the former inhabitants, by giving the remnant of the vanquished in any district the means of escape to those districts which were yet unconquered.

Let us hear Sharon Turner on the same subject:—

It was in the slow progression which has been stated that the Anglo-Saxons possessed themselves of the different districts of the island. The Britons, with all the faults of their mode of defense, yielded no part till it had been dearly purchased; and almost a century and a half passed away from the first arrival of Hengist to the full establishment of the octarchy. We cannot state in what year each British principality was destroyed, or each county subdued; but we have seen that, from the sea-coasts where they landed, the invaders had always to fight their way, with pertinacity and difficulty, to the inland provinces.

But the Anglo-Saxons, as they advanced, did not, as some have fancied, exterminate the Britons; though many devastations must have accompanied their progress. The fierce warriors of Germany wanted husbandmen, artisans, and menials for domestic purposes. There can be no doubt that the majority of the British population was preserved to be useful to their conquerors. But the latter imposed their own names on every district, place, and boundary; and spread exclusively their own language in the parts which they occupied. It is, however, true that some Britons disdained the Saxon yoke, and emigrated to other countries. Armorica, or Bretagne, was the refuge to many. From others, Cornwall and Wales received a large accession of population; and some are even said to have visited Holland.*

The most indignant of the Cymry retired into Wales. There the bards, fugitives like the rest, consoled the expatriated Britons with the hope that the day would afterward arrive when they should have their full revenge, by driving out the Saxon hordes. Not only Taliesin sung this animating prediction;† Myrddin

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* H. Cannegieter, in his "Dissertation de Brittenburgo," Hag. Co. 1734, has particularly examined this point. His decision is, that Brittenberg was named from the Britons, but was built by the Romans. He prefers, to the assertion of Gerbrandus, that the Britons fled from the Saxons to Holland and built Catwych on the Rhine, the opinion of Colinus, the ancient monastical poet, who admits that they visited and ravaged it, but affirms that they did not settle.

† A serpent with chains,
Towering and plundering,
With armed wings
From Germania;

This will overrun
All Loegria and Brydon,
From the land of the Lochlin sea,
To the Severn.

After mentioning that the Britons will be exiles and prisoners to Saxony, he adds,

Their lord they shall praise,
Their language preserve,

also promised the Britons that they should again be led by their majestic chief, and be again victorious. He boldly announced that in this happy day should be restored to every one his own: that then the horns of gladness should proclaim the song of peace, the serene days of Cambrian happiness. The anticipation of this blissful era gave rapture to the Cymry, even in their stony paradise of Wales.* The proud invaders mocked the vaunting prophecy, and, to render it nugatory, unpeopled some of their native coasts on the Baltic, † and filled Britain with an active and hardy race, whose augmenting population and persevering valor at length carried the hated Saxon scepter even to the remotest corners of venerated Anglesey. But up to the reign of Alfred, and even afterward, the Britons still maintained their own kingdoms in Cornwall and part of Devonshire, and in that portion of the north which composed the Stratclyde district. It was not till Athelstan's reign that they finally lost Exeter.

We have seen that at the close of the sixth century the Anglo-Saxon power was established in Britain, and a number of small kingdoms were struggling for ascendency. During these struggles for supremacy the king who acquired dominion over the others received the title of Bretwalda—a word meaning "supreme ruler." There were eight of these rulers. Kent, having been the first conquered, was the first also to establish dominion over the other kingdoms. Ella of Kent was the first to enjoy the title of Bretwalda; the second was Ceawlin of Wessex; the third Ethelbert of Kent. Anglia supplied the fourth; Northumbria the next three; and Wessex the eighth and last.

II. Religion of the Ancient Saxons.

The Saxons, at the time of their coming into Britain, were idolaters. The following description of their heathenism is from Palgrave's "History of the Anglo-Saxons:"—

Their country lose,
Except wild Wales,
Till the destined period of their triumph revolves,
Then the Britons will obtain
The crown of their land,
And the strange people
Will vanish away.

He concludes with declaring that Michael had predicted the future happiness of Britain.—Taliesin, p. 94.

Gildas, p. 8, states that the Saxons had a prophecy that they should ravage Britain 150 years, and enjoy it 150. The limitation has rather a Cambrian aspect.

* These epithets are Welsh. Stony Wales is a phrase of Taliesin, and Llywarch denominates Powis "the paradise of the Cymry," p. 119.

† Bede affirms the complete emigration of the Angles; he says, their country "ab eo tempore usque hodie manere desertus," lib. i. c. 15. To the like purpose Nennius, "Ita ut insulas de quibus venerant absque habitatore relinquerunt," c. 37.

The religion of the Anglo-Saxons in general—it is not in our power to distinguish between particular tribes—was evidently a compound of the worship of the celestial bodies, or *Sabaism*, as it is termed, and of hero-worship; and the Anglo-Saxon names of the days of the week enable us to give a compendium of their creed.

Sunnandæg and *Monandæg*, or Sunday and Monday, scarcely need a version. It must be remarked, however, that, contrary to the mythology of the Greeks and Romans, the Sun was considered by all the Teutons as a female, and the Moon as a male deity. They had an odd notion that if they addressed that power as a goddess their wives would be their masters.

The third day of the week, following the two great festivals of Sun-day and Moon-day, was known among many of the German nations by the name of "*Dingstag*," or the Court-day, the popular tribunals being then held. But the Anglo-Saxons called it "*Tiues-dæg*," or Tuesday. Some learned men suppose that "*Tiue*" is the "*Tuisco*" noticed by Tacitus as a deity, whom the Teutons praised in their hymns, and from whom the Teutonic nations were named. Others identify him with *Tyr*, one of the twelve companions of Odin, much venerated in the north.

Wodnesdæg, or Wednesday, was consecrated to the great *Woden*, or *Odin*. The worship of this hero was common to all the Teutons. He was their king, from whom their science and lore had been derived. The song of the bard and the incantation of the sorcerer had been taught by Odin, and all the princes and rulers of the Anglo-Saxons claimed, as I have before observed, to be considered as his progeny. In the Scandinavian "*Sagas*," or romances, Odin appears as the leader by whom the "Asi," or Northmen, were conducted to the shores of the Baltic from their original clime, perhaps the neighborhood of the Black Sea; and the learned historians of Sweden and Denmark, by the ingenious device of supposing that there were *three* Wodens or Odins at different periods, have contrived to reduce the adventures ascribed to him to a kind of consistent chronology. Woden must, however, be considered merely as a mythological creation; and though it is very probable that there is some authentic foundation for the historical character of the "Furious One,"*—such being the meaning of his name—yet it is quite impossible to analyze the elements of which it is composed.

Thor, the patron deity of *Thorsdæg*, or Thursday, follows in the rank immediately after Odin. Thor, like the Roman Jove, to whom the same day was assigned, was worshiped as the Thunderer; his thunderbolt was a hammer, which he wielded with irresistible force, and many tales and fables are told of his achievements and battles against giants and demons.

Freya was the wife of Odin, and gave her name to *Freya-dæg*, or Friday. She was the Venus of the North.

Lastly came *Sæter*, from whom Saturday was named. He was represented as standing upon a fish, and he held a bucket in his hand, so that he appears to have been a water deity.

Besides the before-mentioned deities, many others received their share of honor. *Saxnote*, the son of Odin, was venerated by the old Saxons of Germany, and probably by their kinsmen in Britain, almost as highly as Odin himself; and from him the kings of Essex were descended. On the Continent, the Slavonians, who spread themselves into Europe out of Asia at a later period than the Teu-

* *Wood* still means *mad* in the actual dialect of Scotland.

tons, had possessed themselves of the shores of the Baltic, where the old Saxons dwelled. The Russians are Slavonians; but this great nation consisted of many tribes, and the wild people who advanced as far as the Elbe were also called *Slavo-Winidi, Vendi*, or Vandals. Their mythology had some affinity to the system which now prevails among the Hindus. Their idols were often many-headed, and covered with symbols. The Slavonians or Vandals adopted some of the Teuton gods from their Saxon neighbors: the latter equally borrowed from the Slavonians; and Astear appears to have been one of these foreign deities.

In Britain, especially in Deira, the Angles appear to have united their own idolatry to the ministration of a druidical hierarchy. This flexibility of opinion was not the result of unsteadiness. Ignorantly worshiping, and knowing not how to seek the truth, they felt the insufficiency of their belief, and yearned for a better creed. Rocks, and running streams, and green trees, were considered as objects requiring libations and sacrifices. Not that the Anglo-Saxons believed that stocks and stones, or the water, could listen to them; but they offered their prayers beneath the shadows of the forest, or on the banks of the rushing torrent, as being the places more particularly haunted by the *Elves*, or subordinate Deities who filled this sublunary globe, though unseen to mortal eye. Yet, notwithstanding these and many other similar delusions, the Teutonic nations retained some faint reminiscences of the truths revealed or shadowed to the Patriarchs. Possibly the week of seven days, as used by them, may be considered as one of these vestiges. They had a very firm conviction that the soul did not perish with the body. Of their conception of the essence of the Divine Being the Anglo-Saxon language affords a singular testimony, for the name of *God* signifies *Good*. He was goodness itself, and the author of all goodness. Yet the idea of denoting the Deity by a term equivalent to abstract and absolute perfection, striking as it may appear, is perhaps less remarkable than the fact that the word *Man*, which they used, as we do, to designate a human being, also signified *Wickedness;* showing how well they were aware that our fallen nature had become identified with sin and corruption. They held the doctrine that this visible world was to be judged and destroyed, preparatory to a new and happier state of being. Though wild, and ferocious toward their enemies, they were less corrupted than the more polished Greeks and Romans. They were faithful, chaste, and honest; turning toward the light, and seeking amendment. The ground was good; and when the sower cast the seed, it brought forth an abundant harvest.

III. The Spiritual Conquest of Britain.

Not two centuries elapsed from the time of their arrival in the island before the whole Saxon people were converted to Christianity. This great work was accomplished chiefly by the mission of St. Augustine. It is related that Pope Gregory saw one day certain slaves for sale in the market-place of Rome. "To what nation do these poor boys belong?" was the question he asked of the dealer. Learning that they were heathen, and called Angles, he exclaimed, "Rightly are they called Angles, for they have angels' beauty; and therefore it is fit that they in heaven should be the companions of angels." "This conversa-

tion," says Palgrave, "may appear trifling; but it was destined to produce the most important events. The state of Britain having been introduced to the notice of Gregory, he brooded over the thought, and determined to proceed thither in the character of a missionary." He was prevented from carrying this design into effect; but as soon as he became Pope of Rome, Augustine, with forty monks, was sent to convert the Saxons. The people of Kent were the first to receive the Christian faith. Canterbury, the capital of Kent, was the first Christian city, and it has since remained the spiritual metropolis of England. Christianity spread to the north in the time of the Bretwalda Edwin of Northumbria. When Paulinus visited his court the king convened a council to consider the propriety of receiving the Christian faith. It was in the "Assembly of the Wise" that a pagan counselor gave utterance to that "beautiful imaginative argument" which has been thus rendered by Wordsworth :—

"Man's life is like a sparrow, mighty King!
That, stealing in, while by the fire you sit
Housed with rejoicing friends, is seen to flit
Safe from the storm, in comfort tarrying.
Here did it enter—there on hasty wing
Flies out, and passes on from cold to cold;
But whence it came we know not, nor behold
Whither it goes. Even such that transient Thing
The human Soul; not utterly unknown
While in the Body lodged, her warm abode;
But from what world She came, what woe or weal
On her departure waits, no tongue hath shown;
This mystery if the Stranger can reveal,
His be a welcome cordially bestowed!" *

Soon afterward Edwin and his court were baptized. York, the capital of Edwin's kingdom, still remains the ecclesiastical center of the north of England. The result of the conversion of the Saxons is well summed up by Mr. Freeman:—

The conversion of the English to Christianity at once altered their whole position in the world. Hitherto our history had been almost wholly insular; our heathen forefathers had but little to do, either in war or in peace, with any nations beyond their own four seas. We hear little of any connection being kept up between the Angles and Saxons who were settled in Britain, and their kinsfolk who abode in their original country. The little intercourse that we read of seems to be wholly with the Franks who now bore rule on the opposite coast of Gaul. Englishmen seem once, in the sixth century, to have found their way to

*Wordsworth's "Ecclesiastical Sonnets." Wordsworth followed the text of Bede.

the Imperial Court, but it was in company with the embassadors of a Frankish prince, who at least tried to represent himself as the suzerain of Britain. One instance of connection between Britain and Gaul may have had some indirect effect in promoting the work of conversion. English kings then, and long after, commonly intermarried with English women, the daughters either of other English princes or of their own nobles. But the Bretwalda Æthelberht, before the landing of Augustine, was already married to a Frankish princess, who retained her Christian religion in his heathen court. Such a fact is chiefly remarkable for its strangeness; yet it points to a considerable amount of intercourse between Kent and the Franks of Paris at this particular moment. Still, up to the end of the sixth century Britain, as a whole, was cut off from the rest of the world. It was a heathen and barbarous island, where the Christian Faith was professed only by an obscure remnant, which in some remote corners, beyond the reach of the invaders, still retained a form of Christianity which, after all, was not the orthodoxy of the old or of the new Rome. By its conversion England was first brought, not only within the pale of the Christian Church, but within the pale of the general political society of Europe. But our insular position, combined within the events of our earlier history, was not without its effect on the peculiar character of Christianity as established in England. England was the first great territorial * conquest of the spiritual power beyond the limits of the Roman Empire, beyond the influence of Greek and Roman civilization. Italy, Spain, Gaul, Africa, the Greek East, and the remoter Churches of doubtful loyalty and orthodoxy, were all either actually under the sway of Cæsar, or retained distinct traces of the recent times when they had been so. When Æthelberht received baptism, the political sway of Rome still reached from the Ocean to the Euphrates, and the language of Rome was the one civilized speech from the Ocean to the Hadriatic. Strictly national Churches existed only in those lands of the further East, where the religious and political loyalty of Syrians and Egyptians was already equally doubtful, and which were destined to fall away at the first touch of the victorious Saracen. In England, alone in the West, a purely national Church arose. One great error, indeed, was committed; the vernacular tongue did not become the language of public worship. The mistake was natural. It had occurred to no man to translate the Latin services, drawn up at a time when Latin was the universal language of the West, into those provincial dialects, the parents of the Romance tongues, which might already be growing up in Gaul and Spain. We should as soon think of translating the Prayer Book into the dialects of Somersetshire and Yorkshire. Led thus to look upon Latin as the one tongue of worship, as well as of literature and government, Augustine and his successors failed to remark that Teutonic England stood in a wholly different position from Romanized Gaul and Spain. They failed to remark that the same reasons which required that men should pray in Latin at Rome required that they should pray in English at Canterbury. The error was pardonable, but in its effects it was great. Still, though England had not vernacular services, she soon began to form a vernacular literature, sacred and profane, poetical and historical, to which no other nation of the West can supply a parallel. The English Church, reverencing

* The Mœso-Goths in the fourth century were the first Teutonic nation to embrace Christianity, but they were still a wandering tribe, while the conversion of England was a distinct territorial conquest. Armenia again, at the other end of the Roman world, was a territorial conquest more ancient than that of England, but Armenia lay far more open to imperial influences than England did.

tion," says Palgrave, "may appear trifling; but it was destined to produce the most important events. The state of Britain having been introduced to the notice of Gregory, he brooded over the thought, and determined to proceed thither in the character of a missionary." He was prevented from carrying this design into effect; but as soon as he became Pope of Rome, Augustine, with forty monks, was sent to convert the Saxons. The people of Kent were the first to receive the Christian faith. Canterbury, the capital of Kent, was the first Christian city, and it has since remained the spiritual metropolis of England. Christianity spread to the north in the time of the Bretwalda Edwin of Northumbria. When Paulinus visited his court the king convened a council to consider the propriety of receiving the Christian faith. It was in the "Assembly of the Wise" that a pagan counselor gave utterance to that "beautiful imaginative argument" which has been thus rendered by Wordsworth:—

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*Wordsworth's "Ecclesiastical Sonnets." Wordsworth followed the text of Bede.

achieving the union of the whole English nation under one scepter than any prince before the West-Saxon Ecgberht. Every thing looked as if the permanent dominion of Britain were destined for Mercia, and even as if the faith of Christ were about to be plucked up out of the land before it had well taken root. But it was impossible that England should now fall back under the rule of a mere heathen conqueror. The dominion of Penda appears in our history as a mere passing tyranny, and, though he must have possessed more real power than any one English prince had done before him, his name finds no place on the list of Bretwaldas. At last the seventh prince who bore that title, Oswiu of Northumberland, checked him in his last invasion, and slew him in the battle of Wingfield, a name which, obscure as it now sounds, marks an important turning-point in the history of our island. The strife between the creeds of Christ and of Woden was there finally decided; the Mercians embraced the religion of their neighbors, and Northumberland again became the leading power of Britain. Under her two Bretwaldas, Oswald and Oswiu, the English dominion was seemingly for the first time extended beyond the Forth, and Picts and Scots, as well as English and Britons, admitted the supremacy of the Northumbrian king. But the greatness of Northumberland lasted no longer than the reigns of Oswiu and his son Ecgfrith. Ecgfrith was slain in battle against the Picts; the northern dominion of Northumberland died with him, and the kingdom itself, which had been for a while the most flourishing and advancing state in Britain, became utterly weakened by intestine divisions. It sank into utter insignificance, and stood ready, as we shall soon see, for the irruption of a new race of conquerors. After the decline of Northumberland the Christian Mercians are again seen on the road to that supremacy which had once been so nearly grasped by their heathen forefathers. The fall of Penda carried with it a momentary subjugation of Mercia to Northumberland but the land almost immediately recovered its independence, and in the next century Mercia advanced from independence to dominion. Under three bold and enterprising kings, Æthelbald, Offa, and Cenwulf, the armies of Mercia went forth conquering and to conquer, and the periods of momentary confusion which divided these three vigorous reigns seem to have been no serious hinderance to the general advance of the kingdom. Wessex was still engaged in its long struggle with the Welsh, and was in no position to aspire to the dominion of Britain. It was quite as much as the West-Saxon Kings could do to push their conquests against the Welsh on the one hand and to maintain their independence against Mercia on the other. Wessex was more than once invaded by the Mercians; and at one time it became actually tributary, till Cuthred, in the middle of the eighth century, finally secured its independence in the fight of Burford. In the latter half of that century Offa raised the Mercian Kingdom to a greater degree of real power than it had ever held, even during the momentary dominion of Penda. He conquered from the Welsh the lands between the Severn and the Wye, a permanent and useful acquisition for the English nation, which he is said to have secured by the great dyke which still bears his name. On the other side of Britain all the smaller States, East-Anglia, Essex, Kent, and Sussex, were brought more or less completely under his power. Victorious over all enemies within his own island, Offa, as the mightiest potentate of the West, corresponded on equal terms with the Great Charles, the mightiest potentate of the East. Occasional misunderstandings between the two princes seem not to have seriously interrupted their friendship. It is possible that the Kentish Kings applied for help against Offa to the mighty Frank; it is more cer-

tain that, after Offa's death, Charles, now emperor, procured the restoration of the banished Northumbrian King Eardwulf, and there seems reason to believe that both the Northumbrian and his Scottish neighbors acknowledged themselves the vassals of the new Augustus.

After the death of Offa the greatness of Mercia continued for a while undiminished under the reign of his son Cenwulf. But meanwhile the seeds of a mighty revolution were being sown. A prince, taught in the school of adversity, who had learned the arts of war and statecraft at the feet of the hero of the age, was, in the sixth year after Offa's death, raised to the throne of the West-Saxons. He was destined to achieve a dominion for which that narrow and local description seemed all too mean. Once, and seemingly once only, in the hour of victory, did the eighth Bretwalda, the founder of the permanent supremacy of Wessex, venture to exchange his ancestral title of King of the West-Saxons for the prouder style of KING OF THE ENGLISH.—FREEMAN'S *Norman Conquest.*

V. EGBERT AND THE FORMATION OF ENGLAND.

Ecgberht was chosen king of the West-Saxons in the same year in which Charles the Great was chosen emperor. And we can hardly doubt that the example of his illustrious friend and host was ever present before his eyes. He could not, indeed, aspire, like Charles, to the diadem of the Cæsars, but he could aspire to an analogous rank in an island which men sometimes counted for a separate world. He could win for his own kingdom a permanent superiority over all its neighbors, and so pave the way for the day when all England and all Britain should acknowledge only a single king. The eighth Bretwalda not only established a power over the whole land such as had been held by no other prince before him, but he did what no other Bretwalda had ever done, he handed on his external dominion as a lasting possession to his successors in his own kingdom. From this time forward Wessex remained the undisputed head of the English nation. The power of the West-Saxon kings might be assaulted, and at last overthrown, by foreign invaders, but it was never again disputed by rival potentates of English blood. In short, as Charles founded the Kingdom of Germany, Ecgberht at least laid the foundations of the Kingdom of England. In his reign of thirty-six years he reduced all the English kingdoms to a greater or less degree of subjection. The smaller States seem to have willingly submitted to him as a deliverer from the power of Mercia. East-Anglia became a dependent ally; Kent and the smaller Saxon kingdoms were more closely incorporated with the ruling State. While in East-Anglia kings of the old line continued to reign as vassals of the West-Saxon overlord, Kent, Essex, and Sussex were united into a still more dependent realm, which was granted out as an appanage to some prince of the West-Saxon royal house.* Northumberland, torn by civil dissensions, was in no position to withstand the power which was growing up in the south of Britain. At the approach of a West-Saxon army the Northumbrians seem to have submitted without resistance, retaining, like East-Anglia, their own line of vassal kings. But Mercia was won only after a long struggle. Ecgberht had inherited war with Mercia as an inheritance from his predecessors. The first year of his reign, before he had himself returned to as-

* One can hardly describe these relations between the different States without using such words as "homage," "appanage," and the like, though, of course, they were quite unknown in England at the time.—FREEMAN.

sume the crown to which he had been chosen, was marked by a successful resistance to a Mercian inroad. And even many years after, one of the greatest victories of his reign, the fight of Ellandun, was a victory over Mercian invaders within the West-Saxon realm. That victory deprived Mercia of all her external dominion; it was immediately after it that Ecgberht annexed the smaller kingdoms which had become Mercian dependencies. Four years later, Mercia herself had to submit to the conqueror, and, though she retained her kings for another half century, yet they now received their crown at the hands of the West-Saxon overlord. It is immediately after recording this greatest of Ecgberht's triumphs that the Chronicles give him, in a marked way, the title of Bretwalda.

It was immediately after the submission of Mercia that Ecgberht received the far more easily won submission of Northumberland, which completed his work of welding all the Teutonic kingdoms into one whole. But, while thus occupied, he had also to carry on the usual warfare with his Celtic neighbors. The power of the Cornish Britons was now utterly broken. The long struggle which had gone on ever since the days of Cerdic was now over; the English frontier seems to have been extended to the Tamar,* and the English supremacy was certainly extended to the Land's End. The Welsh, however, within the conquered territory still retained their distinct existence, and they sometimes, with the aid of foreign invaders, strove to cast off the yoke. Against the North-Welsh,† that is, the inhabitants of Wales proper, Ecgberht was equally successful. As Lord of Mercia he inherited from the Mercian kings a warfare against them as constant as that which he had inherited from his own ancestors against the Welsh of Cornwall. As soon, therefore, as he had established his supremacy over Mercia, he went on to require and to receive the submission of the Celtic neighbors of his new dominion. From this time forth all the Celtic inhabitants of Britain south of the Dee were vassals of the West-Saxon king. But his power seems not to have extended over the Picts, the Scots, or the Strathclyde Welsh. In fact, the northern Celts, except so far as they came in for their share of the Danish invasions, enjoyed, from about this time, a century of unusual independence. The power of Northumberland had long been unequal to maintaining its old supremacy over its Celtic neighbors, and the new overlord of Northumberland seems not to have attempted to enforce it. Ecgberht, therefore, when at the height of his power, was not lord of the whole Isle of Britain. To win that title was the work of the West-Saxon conquerors of the next century.

But, just as the West-Saxon monarchy was reaching this pitch of greatness, it was threatened by an enemy far more formidable than any that could be found within the four seas of Britain. We have now reached the time of the Danish invasions. The northern part of Europe, peopled by a people closely akin to the Low-Dutch, and speaking another dialect of the common Teutonic speech, now began to send forth swarms of pirates over all the seas of Europe, who from pirates often grew into conquerors. They were still heathens, and their incursions, both in Britain and on the Continent, must have been a scourge almost as fright-

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* I infer this from the description of the battle of Gafulford in 823, which is said to have been fought between the Welsh and the men of Devon, who must, therefore, have been English, or at least acting in the English interest. Yet Devonshire, and even the city of Exeter, remained partly Welsh as late as the time of Æthelstan.

† *Norð-Wealas* in the Chronicles means the inhabitants of Wales in the modern sense, both North and South; they are opposed to the *West-Wealas*, the Welsh of Cornwall.—FREEMAN.

ful as the settlement of the English had been to the original Britons. The incursions of the Northmen began before the accession of Egberht, and even his power did not keep them wholly in check. It must, however, have had some considerable effect, as it is only quite toward the end of his reign that we hear of them again. In his last years their incursions became frequent and formidable, and in one battle the Bretwalda himself was defeated by them. But he afterward gained, over the united forces of the Northmen and the revolted Welsh, the battle of Hengestesdun in Cornwall, which may rank with Ellandun as the second great victory of his reign. Soon after this success, which barely checked the Danish invasion, but which completed the submission of the West-Welsh, King Egberht died, like his model, Charles, with his own power undiminished, but possibly foreseeing what was to come when his scepter should pass into weaker hands.—FREEMAN'S *Norman Conquest.*

Amid these changes of fortune—dire reverses, and horrible triumphs—which were only partially brought to an end when Egbert of Wessex attained something like a supremacy at the beginning of the ninth century, and England had taken a place among the Christian communities of Europe; it is consoling to turn from the outrages of barbarous chieftains to the contemplation of the learned and the pious, in their peaceful cells, keeping alive that flame of knowledge which without them might have been extinguished for ages. Out of his cloisters at Iona the light of piety and learning is first shed by Columba over the darkness of the northern Picts. Wilfred, the Bishop of York, builds churches in his diocese; and also teaches industrial arts to the South Saxons. Benedict Biscop, the Abbot of Wearmouth, fills his monastery with books and pictures which he brought from Rome. Cædmon, the cowherd, sings The Creation, and The Fall, in strains which have obtained for him the name of the Saxon Milton. Adhelm, whose Anglo-Latin poetry manifests his accomplishments—a minstrel as well as a poet—stands upon the bridge of Malmesbury, and, as the peasants pass to and fro, gathers a crowd to listen to some of the popular songs to the accompaniment of his harp, and gradually weaves into the verses holy words of exhortation. Bede, a monk of undoubted genius and vast learning, sits in his cell at Jarrow, and, amid other worthy monuments of his piety and knowledge, gathers the obscure history of his country out of doubtful annals and imperfect traditions, weaving them into a narrative which we feel to be a conscientious one, however intermixed with stories which we, somewhat presumptuously, term superstitious. These men, and many illustrious fellow-laborers, struggled through the days of heathendom, and scarcely saw the full establishment of Christianity in this land. But the influences of what they taught gradually wrought that change which made the English one nation, under one creed. In the meantime knowledge is leading on to general civilization. "The darkness begins to break: and the country which had been lost to view as Britain reappears as England." *—KNIGHT'S *History of England.*

* Macaulay.

II. The English and the Danes.

GUIDE ANALYSIS.

I. The Sea-Kings or Norsemen.
  1. Leading features of Norse character.
  2. Their religious beliefs.
II. The First Invasion of the Danes.
  1. Scandinavian songs; their influence.
  2. Capture of York; East Anglia.
III. Alfred the Great.
  1. Alfred and the Danes.
  2. Alfred and general improvement.
  3. His genius and energy.
  4. Traits in his character.

In the reign of the early Saxon kings ancient chroniclers present us with little else than accounts of battles fought and towns plundered by the Danes or Norsemen, a set of bold pirates under the command of Vikings or Sea-kings. Like the Saxons of old, they rejoiced in the storms of the ocean, and on its waves they spent the greater portion of their time. At first they came to the shores of England as plunderers, sometimes swooping down in small marauding bands; again coming in armies led by kings and jarls. Whenever the Danish raven was seen above the waves that bore their small barks toward England, it was the sure omen of wasted fields, plundered towns, and pillaged monasteries. For two centuries the country was a prey to these fearless sea-rovers. At last the struggle between the two fierce Teutonic breeds ended in the Danish plunderers becoming the conquerors of the English people. But before Saxon independence was given up to Canute, the Saxon arms many times prevailed, and there were periods of prosperity, when the arts of peace flourished, schools were founded, and kings "reared up God's honor."

To this early English period belong two great names—King Alfred and Dunstan—which, in their several ways, characterize and illustrate the history of the times. King Alfred, the hero of fifty-six battles, was a "wise and virtuous man, a religious man, a learned man." "So long as I have lived," he writes, "I have striven to live worthily, and after my death to leave my memory to my descendants in good works." He realized this noble desire, and by eminent services to the world "has merited the title 'The Great' better, perhaps, than any other of the celebrated monarchs who have borne it."

It is difficult for the student of history to form a just estimate of the character of Dunstan. The eulogies of one party and the vituperations of another make it far easier to go to either extreme than to find out the truth.* It is certain, however, that he

* Lingard upholds the piety of St. Dunstan. Palgrave explains his career by a theory of partial insanity. Hume denounces him as a hypocrite. Southey is bitter in his denunciations of the "arch miracle-maker," Dunstan.

possessed powers of the mind which made him the leading spirit throughout several reigns. People, priests, and kings trembled before him. In following his career, we see how intimate was the relation between political and ecclesiastical affairs in Saxon times. Dunstan's history is more or less connected with the reigns of seven kings. He won the affections of Athelstan by the variety and excellence of his accomplishments. Edmund made him Abbot of Glastonbury, and Edred offered to make him a bishop. He was banished by Edwy, and made Archbishop of Canterbury by Edgar. It was through Dunstan's administration that Edgar received the homage of the eight British kings by whom his barge was once rowed on the Dee. Edward was raised to the throne through the influence of Dunstan, against the strong opposition of a party in favor of Elfrida's son, Ethelred, who was afterward crowned by the archbishop in person.

During the reign of these kings the Saxons were free from the fierce inroads of the Danes; but soon after the death of Edgar—of whom the Saxon Chronicle says, "God was his helper, and without battle he ruled as he willed"—their ships were seen along the shores. Warfare was waged, until at length, in the eleventh century, Canute, that mighty Scandinavian monarch, was King of England.

I. The Sea-Kings or Norsemen.

The Norsemen were of the same stock with the West Saxons and Jutes, and they spoke a kindred language. Their mode of life has been handed down to us. The law of succession gave the father's land to the eldest son, and drove the younger branches of the family to maintain themselves by their swords and ships.

LEADING FEATURES OF NORSE CHARACTER.

The institutions of the Norsemen in their own country resembled those of the Anglo-Saxons in their main features. There were the same distinctions of classes; similar popular assemblies; and the system of money measurement for ranks and offenses was even more complicated in Norway and Iceland than in England. Among Scandinavian specialties we may class the duel as a form of judicial process; and, on the other hand, the frith-guild system was first organized in England, and transplanted from our shores to Norway and Denmark. But the necessities of a seafaring life and of incessant war developed the military qualities of daring and discipline among the Norsemen to an extent that perhaps has never been equaled. The captive sea-rover would sometimes refuse life upon any, even the most honorable, terms; as a Danish king expressed it, life with all its old enjoyments, but with the sentiment of a single defeat, would be unbearable. In act, any death, if it were only in battle, was the crown of an honorable life;

failing this, the pagan of the North threw himself from a cliff. Siward, of Northumbria, whose Christianity deterred him from suicide, stood armed and erect out of bed in his last moments, that at least he might not die huddled up like a cow. Men thus minded, who compared the joy of battle to the raptures of love, were not likely to be more careful of others' lives than of their own; their very jests had a terrible grimness; they were silent when they suffered, and laughed in death. When Sigurd, the pirate, who had seen his comrades butchered, was asked what he thought of their fate, he answered, "I fear not death, since I have fulfilled the greatest duty of life; but I pray thee not to let my hair be touched by a slave, or stained with blood." His request was granted, and a freeman held up his hair for the fatal stroke; but as the axe descended, Sigurd swayed himself forward, and the blow fell upon his captor's hands. The rough humor of the joke so completely fell in with the spirit of their conquerors that Sigurd and his remaining companions were spared. It was one of the better results of this fearlessness that it encouraged a punctilious love of truth, resembling honor. The beaten warrior, bound by his word, would remain on the ground while his adversary fetched a weapon to despatch him. Moreover, the pursuit of arms, though it excluded labor from the ideal of life, involved a severe discipline as to the condition of success. It would be absurd to say that northern society was chaste: the women were guarded in separate quarters till marriage; they were commonly married to the rich, and intrigued with the strong; and adultery, though it involved slavery in Denmark, was chiefly reprobated as a breach of the laws of property, was practiced by heroes, and praised by bards. But, allowing for the necessary absence of all Christian ideas upon this subject, we may fairly say that the Norsemen, if not moral, were not eminently impure; and their crimes were rather those of passion than of that deliberate vice which eats into the soul.—PEARSON'S *History of England.*

THEIR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS.

To such a political and social organization we must add a religious faith second to none invented by man, not excepting that of Mahomet, in its power of consecrating valor, and inspiring men with contempt of pain and death. The idea of a universal Father, the Creator of sky and earth, and of mankind, the Governor of all kingdoms, though found in the Edda, has by this time faded out from the popular faith. Woden is now the chief figure in that weird mythology—"wuotan," the power of movement, soon changing into the god of battles, "who giveth victory, who reanimates warriors, who nameth those who are to be slain." This Woden had been an inspired teacher, as well as a conqueror, giving runes to these wild Northmen, a Scandinavian alphabet, and songs of battle. A teacher as well as a soldier, he had led them from the shores of the Black Sea (so their traditions told) to the fiords of Norway, the far shores of Iceland. Departed from among his people, he has drawn their hearts after him, and lives there above in Asgard, the garden of the gods. Here in his own great hall, Valhalla, the hall of Odin, he dwells; in that hall of heroes, into which the "Valkyrs," or "choosers of the slain," shall lead the brave, even into the presence of Odin, there to feast with him. This reward for the brave who die in battle; but for the coward? He shall be thrust down into the realm of Hela, death, whence he shall fall to Niflheim, oblivion, extinction, which is below in the ninth world.

Round the central figure of Woden cluster other gods. Chief of these, Balder the sun-god, white, beautiful, benignant, who dies young; and Thor the thunder-

god, with terrible smiting hammer and awful brows, engaged mainly in expeditions into Jotun-land, a chaotic world, the residence of the giants or devils, "frost," "fire," "tempest," and the like. Thor's attendant is "Thealfi," manual labor. In his exploits the thunder-god is like Samson, full of unwieldy strength, simplicity, rough humor.

There is a tree of life, too, in that unseen world, Igdrasil, with its roots in Hela, the kingdom of death, at the foot of which sit the three "Nornas," the past, present, and future. Also the Scalds have a vision of supreme struggle of the gods and Jotuns, a day of the Lord, as the old Hebrew seers would call it, ending in a "Twilight of the gods," a sinking down of the created universe, with gods, Jotuns, and inexorable Time herself, into darkness—from which shall there not in due course issue a new heaven and new earth, in which a higher god and supreme justice shall at last reign?—HUGHES' *Life of Alfred the Great.*

II. The First Invasion of the Danes.

It needed a strong hand and clear intellect to resist the enemies which now made their appearance in the land. Egbert's death, besides depriving his subjects of his guidance, had weakened the country by a division of his various states among his sons. Wessex was again a separate kingdom, and might have begun its course of victory and supremacy once more against the other populations, but was diverted from its dreams of ambition, if any it entertained, by a danger that made it apply all its efforts to self-defense. This was an invasion of a new and totally uncivilized people, who made landings in various parts of the country, and every-where marked their presence with the blood of all they met. Possession had by this time entirely obliterated from the descendants of Hengist and Horsa the nature and circumstances of their own invasion. But if the wish of the poet had been granted them, "to see ourselves as others see us," they could not have had a closer presentment of their own onslaughts upon the Romanized Celts. The same brutal disregard of life, and enmity to the very appearance of refinement, the same truculent beliefs and degrading ideas of a future life, characterized the Sea-kings, or Norsemen, who now descended on our shores, as had carried terror and destruction among the cities and villas of that earlier time. While the Saxons were irritated at the audacity of those imitators of their own achievements, and wondering at the lawlessness of those pitiless barbarians, horde after horde of armed Danes and Norwegians mounted their small barks in the bays and creeks of the Baltic, and in three days' sail, when they availed themselves of a favorable wind, ran them on the beach of our eastern coast. Gathering the crews of as many of them as they could, they murdered, burned, and pillaged throughout the district where they landed; and, loaded with booty, and shrieking songs of triumph over the massacre of monks and women, betook themselves to the sea again, and carried the same devastation to some other part of the shore. The first landing in Cornwall (which occurred in Egbert's life-time) was repulsed with loss, and the native Britons still occupying that district were ruthlessly punished for the aid they had afforded the invader. The next landings were in greater force, and in another quarter. Division and enmity had broken out in the newly-resuscitated Deira, Bernicia, and Mercia. They owned the uneasy sway of the younger son of Egbert, and were paralyzed with the diversity, unexpectedness, and fury of the assaults.

Yet the Saxons retained the ancient courage of their race. The Norsemen

found no effeminized population to contend with, but had to fight for every inch of ground. One great battle still continues the theme of ballad and tradition. In the fields of Surrey, where the gentle eminence called Leith Hill now looks over one of the richest views in England, and the eye ranges unchecked over swelling down and pastoral valley, till the blue distance of the chalk ranges of Sussex forms a delightful framework to the picture, there was an enormous gathering of all the forces of the rovers and Saxons. At Aclea, now called Ockley, Ethelwolf, the son of Egbert, at the head of the men of Wessex, inflicted a frightful overthrow upon the heathen, and avenged the defeat he had sustained at the beautiful village of Charmouth in Devonshire, eleven years before. When time and the remembrance of danger had called the imaginative faculties of the combatants into play, the popular legends circulating in the huts of the Saxons represented the Danes as gifted with more than human skill. The peasantry still point out a ruined castle which they believe was battered down by the Norsemen's stone-throwing machines planted on Berry Hill, at a distance of two miles. Defeats and repulses, however, seemed of no use against those swarms of homeless desperadoes. If driven off in Wessex, they appeared in the north; if they were dispersed by the courage of Bishop Ealstan, of Sherborne, on the Parret, they crowded faster than ever into the Isle of Sheppey, and established themselves in Thanet. But in a short time the multitudes who had landed on the eastern shore began to taste the sweets of a settled home; they fixed permanent colonies, guarded by camps and garrisons, a little way inland, and gradually drove the inhabitants toward the west, as their now harrassed and unconscious predecessors had done the Gael.

The chief of the first successful invasion was an ancient pirate of the name of Regner Lodbrog. The pride or patriotism of his descendants has enriched him with noble birth and the hand of a Danish princess; but his contemporaries seem to have had a juster notion of his position, and distinguished him by an allusion to the leather trowsers—Lodbrog—with which he ornamented his person, and which, though elevated into the romantic by the legend of their miraculous qualities, were probably merely a luxury beyond the reach of humbler men. Regner and his three sons made many expeditions against the coasts of England, in which we do not hear of a single vessel being sent out to meet them. Had the old Saxon love of adventure and tendency to maritime enterprise entirely died out? What had become of the White Horse of the original settlers, which waved from so many masts and was seen on every shore when Vortigern summoned it to his aid? The island seems to have been entirely without a fleet, and its subjugation was the inevitable result. Encouraged by the success of his previous attempts, the leather-loined pirate now meditated a greater exploit. He built two vessels of extraordinary size, filled them with his bravest followers, and, waiting for a favorable breeze, slipped his anchors at the mouth of the Baltic, and bore right down on the coast of York. But the ships were too large to run uninjured on the sand; they were beaten to pieces by the surf, and the invaders found themselves on a hostile strand, with nothing but their swords and courage, and no refuge in case of a reverse. Old Regner was undeterred by these considerations, and began his march. He carried on the same system of extermination and rapine as if he had had a place of retreat and safety, but was finally brought to a pause when Ella, the King of Northumbria, with an army, barred up his way. The battle was soon decided; the pirates were killed to the last man, and their leader taken prisoner, to be reserved for a more lingering death. His death it is neces-

sary to look at; for, whether the reported circumstances were true or false, it exercised a permanent influence on the course of future events. He was thrown into a dungeon, and exposed to the assaults of the venomous snakes that had made their nests in the cave. In a very short time the death-song of Regner Lodbrog was sung all over the hills and valleys of Scandinavia. Popular enthusiasm attributed the lines to the sufferer himself; but it was enough that they were put into his mouth, and dramatically represented his feelings:—

We have struck with our swords!
In my youth, when we rushed like a storm on the East,
And the wolf licked its maw at the bloody feast,
When Helting lay desert, her people all slain,
And lances and swords gleamed on Yfer's plain! Hurra!

We have struck with our swords!
Ah! little I thought, when I launch'd my prow,
That a coward like Ella would triumph as now;
But I'm gladdened with thoughts of the joy shall befall
When I drain the skull-goblet in Odin's Hall! Hurra!

We have struck with our swords!
The serpents cling round me, they bite at my breast;
There's a sting in my heart, I am faint for my rest;
But my sons shall revenge me, and tell how I died,
When Ella expires with their points in his side! Hurra!

We have struck with our swords!
In fifty fierce battles my blade has been shown,
No name than old Regner's more proudly is known;
I have longed for a death like the death I am dying,
And I smile when I feel how the moments are flying! Hurra!

No man can overestimate the importance of a popular song. Even in later times we have known Ireland driven nearly frantic by "Lillibullero" and "Croppies lie down," and two revolutions in France consummated to the tune of the Marseillaise. But in a wild, imaginative, bloodthirsty land like Norway, where the whole genius of the people had condensed itself into a burning excitement, which only found vent in passionate words and stirring melodies, the effect was instantaneous and immense. The death of the aged buccaneer became a religious offering to the gods of the northern faith. He was a son and victim of Odin; and all the fiery aspirations of the north took the double form of patriotism and religion. The same spirit, however, was roused on the other side. To be slain by a heathen was to be sacrificed for the cross as well as slaughtered for fatherland. And we accordingly find a long list of Anglo-Saxon martyrs, and even saints, who showed no sign of their Christianity except being murdered by the idolater's sword.

Ella is reported, whether truly or not, to have fallen into the hands of Regner's sons, and to have atoned for his cruelty to their father by a death of equal pain. The flood of savagery and vengeance still swept on, no longer, however, directed by the desultory wishes of individual adventurers, but guided by higher authorities, till it assumed the magnitude and solidity of a national invasion. The city and territory of York fell into the hands of the Danish army in 870, and after for-

tifying their position, and constituting the city the base of their operations, the eight chiefs who headed the expedition began their southward march, and never ceased their advance till the whole of East Anglia and the greater part of Mercia submitted to their power. A Danish king was accepted by the wretched survivors of the ancient inhabitants, who were speedily reduced to slavery by their insatiable lords, and there seemed little chance of putting a stop to the ambition of the innumerable warriors who kept pouring into the country. All to the north of Essex was held by Danish rulers. The small remains, therefore, of the Heptarchy consisted of Wessex, which had long absorbed the tributary States of Kent and Sussex; and all that for a short time could properly be called England was contained between the Thames and the mouth of the Severn.—WHITE'S *History of England.*

III. ALFRED THE GREAT.

Alfred's reign falls into two parts—the first down to 880, in which he was fighting chiefly with the Danes who were settling in the North and East of England under Ragnar's sons and Gorm; the last part, (881 to 901,) when he was chiefly fighting with Hasting and those who were trying to settle, though the settled Danes helped them sometimes.

Soon after he became king he had to fight the Danes, and there was a drawn battle; but the Danes found that it was hard work fighting with Alfred; so, many of them went away and plundered other lands, where the people did not withstand them so well. Then Alfred fought the Danes at sea and took a ship of theirs, which was a great thing to do, for the Danes had splendid ships, and men dreaded them even more on sea than on land.

Next year (876) Halfdan, Ragnar's son, settled with his Danes in Deira, (Yorkshire.) He shared it among them, and they ruled it as their own. And the other Danes, under Guthorm, or Gorm, the Dane king of East Anglia, came back to plunder Wessex. But Alfred made peace with them, and they swore oaths to him on the holy ring, heathen fashion. Next year many of them broke this oath. But one of their fleets was wrecked, so they did not attack Wessex again, but ravaged the Marchland, that still held out for King Alfred, south of Watling-street.

But in 878 they came in such strong bands into Wessex that Alfred had to fly from them into Somerset, where he lived in a little island, called Athelney, (Prince's Island,) among the marshes which then covered that land. There he kept himself concealed till he could get together a force to drive the Danes out of England again. Near here was found, not long ago, a jewel which had belonged to a staff or scepter, and on it the words, "Alfred had me wrought." It was about this time, when he was here hiding, that a story is told of him. He took refuge with a poor man one day, and stayed with him for some time, but the poor man's wife did not know he was the king. She told the king to watch, while she was out of the room, some cakes which she put on the fire; but the king forgot the cakes, for he was thinking and mending his bow and arrows. When the good wife came back the cakes were spoiled. Then she was very angry, and told the king that he was ready to eat them when they were done, but was too lazy to help to do them properly; for she knew not that he had been thinking of greater things.

Soon things began to look brighter, and Alfred was able to come forth as a king again. First, one of Ragnar's sons was slain in Devon, and his magic banner,

that had been worked in one day by his sisters, was taken. It was the image of a raven embroidered and fixed on a pole; its wings waved in the wind, and wherever it went it was said to bring victory to those who owned it. Soon after this victory Alfred gathered a great host at a place he fixed, and then he went after the Danes, and they fought at Eddington, in the West-Saxon land, and Alfred won the day; and there is still to be seen the figure of a horse cut in the turf, on the side of the hill, which is said to be a mark of this great battle. After this battle he followed the Danes and shut them up in a fortress, which they had made, till they promised to make peace and take the Christian faith; for Alfred could not trust their oaths as long as they were heathen. So the Danes and their king were baptized, and Alfred was godfather to Gorm, and gave him a new name, Ethelstan, which had been the name of his own father's brother. Peace, also, was made between the two kings at Wedmore. Gorm-Ethelstan was to keep East Anglia and the north half of Marchland above Watling-street, and be Alfred's man; and Alfred was to keep all the rest. And that part of Marchland which Alfred had he gave to Ethelred, an alderman of his, for there were no longer kings there; and he gave Ethelfled, his daughter, to him to wife.

Next year very few of the Danes stayed south of Watling-street, but most of the Christians went to Gorm-Ethelstan's realm. Those who were still heathen went to join Hasting, a famous sea-rover, who was now in Gaul.

So there was peace in England, but the Danes from abroad would still plunder the coast now and then, and Alfred fought once against them at sea.

Now the Danes ruled Yorkshire, East Anglia, and part of the Marchland; the rest of Northumberland and all south of Watling-street was under Alfred and his aldermen. But the Danes who lived in England were now Christians. That was a great gain to the English, for they no longer plundered cruelly, but began to settle down quietly with the English.

In 885 the kings of Wales are said to have made peace with Alfred, and to have become his under-kings, and this is not unlikely. About this time Charles the Bald became emperor, but he reigned weakly, and his kingdom was divided and never brought together again; and in the north of Gaul the Counts of Paris ruled, who, after a hundred years, became kings of France. They deserved it, for they saved Gaul from the Northmen.

There was at this time in Norway a great king named Harold Fair-hair, who had smitten the small kings and made one great kingdom; and he had a friend, Earl Ronwald, who had helped him much in this work. This king got his name in this way: He fell in love with a lady who was so proud that she would not marry a small king, as he was then, but laughed at him, and said she would wed him when he was king of all Norway. He took this in earnest, and swore he would never cut or curl his hair until he was head king of Norway; and after many years' hard work he became so. Then he combed out his hair and trimmed it, and it was so long that he could tuck it under his belt, and it was as fair as gold. Then he married the proud lady, and she became queen, according to her words. Now, one of Ronwald's sons was so wild that the king thrust him out of the land. His name was Rolf, and he was called Ganger, or Walker, because he was so big and heavy that he could not easily find a horse to bear him. Rolf took to sea-roving, and joined Hasting, a great rover also, and they plundered the coasts of France and England, and began to be very famous. After Alfred's death, Rolf took a large tract of land in the North of France and settled there, as Gorm-Ethelstan had done in the East of England. Men called that land North-

man's land, or Normandy; and Rolf, like Gorm, was baptized with his men, by the name of Robert, and he married the king of France's daughter. The Normans soon began to speak French, for they had not slain all the Frenchmen, but had settled down among them and parceled out the land, though the French still worked on the land and paid rent to the Normans. Had it not been for the Counts of Paris, no doubt the Normans would have conquered all the North of France; but Paris always withstood them, and they could go no farther.

Once before 893 the Danes came over from Holland, where they were plundering, and tried to take Rochester, and ravaged Essex; but Alfred came to the Englishmen's help and drove them away. In 886 he rebuilt the walls of London. In 890 Gorm-Ethelstan died; which was an ill thing for Alfred, for while Gorm lived he tried to keep the peace. In 891 was fought in the Netherlands the great battle of Loewen or Louvain, between the Danes and the East Frank king, who discomfited them and smote them with a great slaughter, so that they dared not ravage in the Frank land for many years. This made them go back to England and try and settle there. So in 893 they came back under Hasting, the sea-rover, built forts of earthwork in Kent, and tried to hold the land. The Danes of Northumberland and East England helped them, and Alfred was hard beset; but he faced them boldly. Next year, while he was fighting against one band in the West, another band came from the East of England up the Thames and rode across the land. Alfred pursued them and won a battle, and they went back to East England. There they left their spoil, and wives and children—for they came, like the English, with all their goods, wishing to make a new home—and then rode across England to Chester, whence they could not easily be driven. But in 896 the Sussex folk put to flight one band that came up out of the West. The next year the Danes brought their ships up the Lea, and made a fort and sat down there; but the English made a great cutting, and turned the water another way, so the Danish ships were left dry. This was by Alfred's counsel, for he had come there to protect the corn against the Danes, for it was harvest-time. When the Danes saw that they could not go back by the river, they took horse and rode across to the Severn valley, and there made another fort and waited for ships. But the men of London went up to fetch the ships the Danes had left, and those that were sea-worthy they kept, but the rest they broke up. Soon after the Danish host left Alfred's kingdom: some went off to their brethren on the East coast, some went over-sea to the Seine, where Rolf was setting up his earldom.

But Alfred found that the best way to keep off the Danes was by having good ships to fight them at sea, and follow them round the coast. So he built long ships against the ships of the Danes, full-nigh twice as long as they, and swifter, steadier, and higher. He seems to have been his own ship-builder, for we are told that he did not occupy the Danish nor Frisian ships, but made them as he thought best for the work of keeping the coasts. Through the unskillfulness of their crews they were not able to beat the Danes, who came and plundered the Isle of Wight and Devon. Yet, though the Danes escaped once from them, they were not willing to risk themselves as they did before Alfred had a good fleet; and soon he was better able by this means to keep the coast.

In 901 Alfred died, and his son, Edward, was made king.

Besides these wars of Alfred and the great troubles of his reign, he found time for many things, so that he got as great a name as ever English king before or after got. He was called the Truth-teller, and the Great. He was a very just king, and took great trouble to make good laws, which he chose out of the laws

of Ethelbert, and Ina, and Offa. Some of his own laws also he set with them, by the counsel of the great men of England. He made strict laws against robbery, violence, and evil-doing, and against those who broke the commandments of the Church and the Bible.

He was a very learned man for his day, and protected scholars, so that his fame spread abroad. In 891 there came to see him four of the chief scholars of Ireland, which was then a great place for learning. He had always learned men about him, such as Asser, the Welshman, who is said to have written his life. When Alfred found that the Danish war had driven learning out of the North, and destroyed the schools which had been there from the days of Bede, he set about finding teachers for his people. He did what he could to teach them himself, for he set many books out of Latin into English for them, that they might learn wisdom; and he added to these books what he thought useful out of his own knowledge. He Englished Bede's History, the Sermons of Pope Gregory, and the philosophy of Bœthius, and a book by Orosius, who wrote of the world and its geography. In his reign, too, the English Chronicles were put into shape, and a full history of Alfred's own time written therein.

Alfred was very careful of the Church. He often sent messengers and gifts to the Pope, and there went messengers from him to the Churches in India and Jerusalem. He built two monasteries, and over one he put his daughter as abbess. The other he built at Athelney, out of thankfulness for the great deliverance he had after the evil days he passed there in hiding.

He was very fond of hearing about foreign lands, and in his translation of Orosius he tells us of the travels of two sea-captains whom he sent to the North Sea and the Baltic. He was also very fond of music.

He was very hard-working, and never lost a moment, but always had something to do, and he always carried a little book with him to put down any thing that seemed useful or good to remember. He governed very wisely, and chose good officers, and took care of rich and poor alike; for he said that in a well-ruled kingdom the priest, the soldier, and the yeoman should each be taken care of, that each might do his appointed work as well as possible.

He was very mild of heart and forgiving. Once, when Hasting had broken his oath to him and was fighting against him, he took his wife and children prisoners; but he sent them back to him, and would not keep them in bonds. He was loved for his good heart as well as for his wise head; and when he was dead men often wished that the days of good King Alfred, "England's darling," would come again.

Though the Danes were still troublesome after Alfred's death, they were not able to do much harm for a long time, and under the kings who reigned for the next hundred years England was greater and more peaceful than it had been before. The reasons why the Danes had been able to conquer and settle down in so much of the land were:—

1. They were able to move about more swiftly in their ships than the English could move along the roads, and so they often took the English unawares.

2. The land of England, though it was under one overlord, was not yet quite one kingdom. Each part of the country still acted by itself a good deal, and so the Danes, though not strong enough to beat the great king, could often drive away the under-kings or aldermen.

3. The Danes were near akin to the English. So, though the English fought very bravely for their land and their homes, yet they felt that if the Danes would

only make peace and dwell among them quietly as neighbors, they would be safer than if they had them as foes.

4. In the first days of the Danish inroads the English king had no regular fleet nor army, like our armies of to-day, always ready to fight any foe. He had only his own guards; and when he wished to go to war, he had to send round and summon all the armed men of the kingdom, and wait till they came together before they could do any thing. They would not stay together very long, but went back to their business whenever they had won a battle or lost one, or had served as long as they thought fit. But at the end of Alfred's reign most of the Danes who had been seeking a fresh home had found one, or had gone back, or had been slain, and so there was rest.—FREDERICK YORK-POWELL, *Early England.*

Mr. Freeman gives the following truthful and eloquent summary of the character of Alfred :—

He is a singular instance of a prince, who has become a hero of romance, who, as such, has had countless imaginary exploits and imaginary institutions attributed to him, but to whose character romance has done no more than justice, and who appears in exactly the same light in history and in fable. No other man on record has ever so thoroughly united all the virtues both of the ruler and of the private man. In no other man on record were so many virtues disfigured by so little alloy. A saint without superstition, a scholar without ostentation, a warrior all whose wars were fought in the defense of his country, a conqueror whose laurels were never stained by cruelty, a prince never cast down by adversity, never lifted up to insolence in the day of triumph—there is no other name in history to compare with his.

III. The Great Old English Kings.

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I. EDWARD THE ELDER, A.D. 901–925.

King Edward, called the Elder, is said to have been in learning less, in honor and worth equal, in glory greater, than his father, for he spread his kingdom much farther than Alfred had done. At first he had much trouble; for one of his cousins, Ethelwald, son of Ethelred, wished to be king in his stead. Though Edward drove him out of his kingdom, the Northern Danes made him their king.

He made an alliance with Yorick, King of the Danes in East England, and ravaged Kent and the Marchland. So Edward went up against him, and many Kentishmen with him, and there was a great battle fought. When Edward was obliged to give way, the men of Kent would not draw back, they were so angry at the wasting of their land; but though Edward sent seven times to them to tell them of their danger, they stayed and fought. Though they did not win the battle, Ethelwald and Yorick and many of the chief Danes fell; and so the danger was stayed. Next year Gorm, the son of Yorick, and Edward made peace, as Alfred and Gorm-Ethelstan had done. They also set Watling-street as a boundary between their lands, and agreed to put down heathendom among their people

Now, Edward and his sister Ethelfled, the Lady of Mercia, set about fortifying all the towns along the Border. The Lady built up Chester, which was a waste city, and many towns she walled throughout her land, and some new ones she built; and Edward did the like in his land.

They fought many battles with the Danes who came from without, for Gorm kept well to the peace. In 912 Ethelred the alderman died, but Ethelfled governed his land after his death very bravely and wisely.

In 913 Charles the Simple, King of the East Franks, gave Normandy to Rolf, and made peace with him. Of the peace between Charles and Rolf it is told that when Rolf became Charles's man, and swore to hold Normandy of him, he was told to kiss the king's slipper in token that he took him as his lord. But he said he would never do that, and he bid one of his men do it for him. The man, instead of stooping down, lifted up the king's foot so that he fell backward on the ground. At this the Northmen laughed, for they thought it wrong that a man should be so proud.

In 915 a large Danish fleet came to England, and the Danes tried to land, but they were driven off, and went to Ireland.

And now there was war again between the English and Danes on the Border; but the Lady was every-where victorious, and she took all the Danes' land up to York, and brought Middle England into Edward's power. At last, just as she was laying siege to York, she died. She had fought, too, with the Welsh, and taken the Welsh queen prisoner. When she was dead Edward joined the Marchland to his kingdom and governed it himself. As before, Edward was victorious over the Danes, and, though they tried hard, they could never take his new castles and walled towns, for he had at last found the true way to stay them. So one after another they came to make peace—first, some Danes from abroad, then the Danes on the borders of Northumberland. At last, in 922, the Welsh, who had tried in vain to get hold of Chester, took him as father and lord. So did the Dane King of York, and the Welsh of the Clyde valley, the English lord of the North who ruled in Bamborough, and the King of the Scots. So now Edward ruled over all Britain as overlord, and over a great part as his own kingdom. This happened in 923, and soon after he died; and his sons took his kingdom after him, and first Ethelstan, or Athelstan, who was also a mighty king. Men called Edward the Unconquered, because of his glory in war.

Edward had many children, and some of his daughters became queens also, for they were married to the great kings over-sea—one to Otto the Emperor, another to Charles the Simple, another to the King of Arles, and one to the great Count of Paris. But one was married to Sigtric, the Dane King in the North. When Charles the Simple, King of the East Franks, was driven from his kingdom, Edgif, his wife, came to England with her little son Lewis, who was afterward king

in his father's land, and he was called Lewis "from over-sea," because he was long at the English court.

This shows that the English kings were now great people, and were thought much of abroad. Also it shows that the kings after Egbert took much care to be friends with the kings abroad. Thus England was no more shut out from the rest of the Western world, as it had been when there were many small kings in England.

Edward, like his father, took great care of the Church, and one of his daughters became a nun; and he set a new bishop in the west of his land, at Wells. Edward died in 925, and his son, Ethelstan, was made king, and there was great joy when he was crowned.—FREDERICK YORK-POWELL, *Early England.*

II. ETHELSTAN THE STEADFAST, A. D. 925–940.

Ethelstan had some trouble at the beginning of his reign, for a cousin of his tried to get made king instead, but he was driven away. Soon the Dane King Sigtric died, and the Danes' war broke out afresh in the North; but Ethelstan took Northumberland and joined it to his own kingdom, though the Englishmen of Bamborough tried to withstand him. The sons of Sigtric fled to Ireland and Scotland, and tried to get help there against him, but Ethelstan made the Scot king keep the peace. And now Ethelstan took Exeter, and made it strong, and set Englishmen in it; so the Welsh had only Cornwall in the West.

But in 937 there gathered a great host against him, for the Scots and Welsh of Strath Clyde joined the Danes. Ethelstan and his brother Edmund marched north to meet them, and they fought at Brunanburg. Of this battle there is a famous song which tells how Ethelstan slew the Scot king's son, and five Dane sea-kings, (kings of fleets,) and many great men. All day they fought, but when evening came the English won the fight.

Before the battle, it is said that Olaf, one of the Dane kings, disguised himself as a harper, and went into Ethelstan's camp to spy out his array. But a soldier who had fought for Olaf in former days saw him and thought he knew him. So when the Englishmen gave him money for his playing, he watched him, and when he saw him bury the money—for Olaf thought it not kingly to take money from the English when he was acting as a spy—he was sure it was the king. When Olaf was gone, he told Ethelstan who it was. But Ethelstan asked him why he had let him go, and the soldier said, "If I had betrayed him whom I once served, how shouldst thou have trusted me, whom I serve now?" And Ethelstan was pleased with his answer. But Olaf gathered his men and fell upon Ethelstan's camp that night, and slew a bishop who lay where Ethelstan had lain. For Ethelstan moved his tent when he knew that Olaf had spied out his camp. But the Englishmen woke up, and at last drove out the Danes and slew many of them. After this great battle the Scot and Welsh kings made peace with Ethelstan again, for they feared his might.

Ethelstan was a very good king, and we never hear of any evil deed of his doing, save that some say he caused his brother Edwin to be put in a boat with one servant and turned adrift at sea, because he had plotted against him. Edwin threw himself overboard in despair and was drowned, and the servant came to land and told of his death. We do not know certainly that this is true; and as we find Ethelstan very kind to all his other kinsfolk, it is rather unlikely.

Ethelstan had many friends abroad, as his father and grandfather had, and it

was in his days that messengers came from the great Count of Paris to ask the hand of the fairest of his sisters. They brought him many splendid gifts, one of which was the sword of Constantine, the emperor, with his name in gold letters graven on it; they brought also the spear of Charles the Great, and a beautiful cup carved marvelously with figures, and horses with fine trappings, and many fair jewels. The like of these treasures had never been seen in England before. The Northern books say, too, that Harold Fairhair sent his little son Hakon to be brought up by Ethelstan. He sent, too, as a present to Ethelstan, a great ship with a gilded prow and a purple sail, and around the bulwarks was a row of shields, gilt and painted. It is certain that Hakon was brought up in England, and that he was called from that Ethelstan's foster-son; but some men say that he was with Gorm-Ethelstan, the Dane King of East England, and not with Ethelstan, the English King. Hakon afterward became king in Norway, and tried to make his people Christian, as he was; but they would not.

The mother of Ethelstan was a poor girl, who was brought up by the nurse of his father, Edward. One day while Edward was on a journey he passed near the house of his old nurse, and stopped and went to see her: there he met this poor girl, and fell in love with her for her great beauty. When Ethelstan was born, his grandfather Alfred was still alive; and when he saw him grow up a good boy, he became very fond of him, and often prayed that he might be a good and great king. He gave him a purple cloak, and a beautiful sword with a golden sheath that hung from a jeweled belt. It was then the custom that when a boy grew up and became a young man he was girt with a sword and belt like a soldier, and was allowed to fight by the side of the men in the day of battle. But Ethelstan was made a soldier when he was yet a boy only six years old.

He was very handsome, like his mother, and had long hair that shone like gold. He was very kind and good-natured to the poor people, and very ready to listen to the priests; to his nobles he behaved as a king should, and toward his enemies he was very brave and steadfast. He was open-handed, and when he took spoil in war he dealt it out among his followers. He would never hoard up riches, but all he had he gave away that it might be used as wisely as possible. When he died, all men mourned for him, and his days, though few, were glorious.—Frederick York-Powell, *Early England.*

III. Edmund the Deed-Doer, A.D. 940–946.

Edmund, his brother, was made king after him; but, by the counsel of the Archbishop of York, the Danes in the North rose against him, and took Olaf of Ireland for their king. Edmund went against them and won back the five great towns in the north of the Marchland. The English that dwelt therein and had been so long ruled by the Danes were very glad, and there was a fine song written on this great deed.

In 943 Olaf made peace with Edmund, and was baptized, and Edmund gave him great gifts. In the same year Dunstan was made Abbot of Glastonbury. He was the son of a great man who lived near Glastonbury, and was brought up at the abbey there. He had been at the court of Ethelstan; but some folks there hated him, so he did not stay long with the king, but was persuaded to become a monk. And now Edmund took him into his favor and gave him Glastonbury to rule. He ruled it well, rebuilt the church, and kept the monks in good order. He was a very wise man and skilled in all things, for he played and sung well, was a good smith, and painted very well. He was also wise in ruling men.

In 944 Olaf of Ireland died, and Olaf, son of Sigtric, ruled in his stead. He fought against Edmund; but Edmund drove him out, and joined all Northumberland to his own kingdom, so that there were no more kings there, but only *earls*, or governors, who ruled for the kings of England.

In the next year Edmund took Cumberland, and gave it to the King of the Scots to rule; and the King of the Scots promised, in return, to be his man and help him in all that he did.

In 946 Edmund was slain in this way: He was sitting at meat with his men, and there came in Leof, an outlaw, for it was the feast-day of St. Augustine, and no man would hurt him on that day, and he sat down with the rest. But the king was wroth when he saw his boldness, and bid his cup-bearer turn him out. When he tried to do so, Leof withstood him, and would have slain him; but the king leaped up from his seat and caught Leof by his hair and threw him down. Then Leof drew a knife and wounded the king to the death; but the king's followers slew Leof on the spot. Dunstan had the king buried at Glastonbury, and mourned greatly for him. Edmund, though he reigned for so few years, did many great deeds, so that men called him Edmund the Deed-doer.—FREDERICK YORK-POWELL, *Early England.*

IV. EDRED THE CHOSEN, A. D. 946–955.

Then reigned Edred, his brother. He was a pious man, and ruled well, though he was infirm of body. He hearkened to the words of Dunstan, and did what he counseled. The Danes in the North rose against him, and the archbishops with them; but Edred fought against them for three years, till they asked for peace and became his men. They had chosen Eric, son of the King of Denmark, to be their king; and he withstood Edred, but Edred drove him out. And Edred put the Archbishop of York in bonds for the harm he had wrought against him; but after a little while he set him loose.

Edred set two earls over Northumberland, one in the North, the other in the South of it, to keep it for him; but that part of it which is called the Lothians, between the Firth and Tyne, he gave to the King of Scots to hold under him, in the same way as he held Cumberland already. Edred was as generous as his brother, and gave much to the Church. In 955 he died, and Dunstan and all England mourned for him. He has been called the "Chosen," or "Excellent," for his goodness, and there have been few kings like him. For he was, like his grandfather, humble and brave and hard-working.—FREDERICK YORK-POWELL, *Early England.*

V. EDWY, A. D. 955–959.

When Edred died, Edwy, the son of Edmund, was crowned king, and his brother, Edgar, was made underking in the North. Edwy was very headstrong, and quarreled with those who had been the greatest friends of Edred.

He married Elfgif; and Oda, the archbishop, did not like this marriage, for he held it was against the law. On the day of Edwy's crowning, when there were many gathered together at the feast, suddenly the king arose from the midst of them and left the hall, and went to his wife's bower, where he sat with her, leaving his nobles by themselves. They were very wroth at this, and bid Dunstan go and fetch the king back, and he did so.

Soon after this the king drove out Dunstan, who went to Flanders; but Edgar

sent for him, and made him a bishop in his part of England. Edwy had another reason for his dislike of him: Dunstan and the best men of the Church at this time were trying to make the monks live better, for they had grown lazy and gluttonous. Edgar and the men of the North were pleased with this; but Edwy and the men of the South set themselves against it. At last the quarrel rose so high about this, and also because of Edwy's foolish acts, that Edgar rose against his brother and would not obey him. It was not till Oda persuaded Edwy to put away his wife and do as he wished that they were reconciled. Some say that the Marchmen took her prisoner, and treated her so cruelly that she died; and some say this was done by order of Oda, but others deny it. Soon after this Edwy died, or was slain, we do not know how, and his brother became king of all England.—FREDERICK YORK-POWELL, *Early England.*

VI. EDGAR THE PEACE-WINNER, A. D. 959–975.

Edgar's rule was very prosperous, and he had peace for the most part of his reign. The first year of his reign Dunstan was made Archbishop of Canterbury, and he continued the king's friend and adviser all the days of his life. With him were Oswolf, Archbishop of York, the nephew of Oda, and Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester. These men also did many good works, for they were very wise and skilled in all arts, as Dunstan was. But one plan they had, which was to turn out from the cathedrals the priests who were not monks, and put monks in their stead, for they thought that the monks, from their strict life, would do more good. But the parish priests and those priests who were not monks did not like this, so that there was a quarrel in the Church.

Edgar at first had to fight against the Scots and Welsh. He made the greatest of the Welsh kings sue for peace, which he gave on condition of his promising to pay him three hundred wolves' heads every year. In those days there were still wolves in England, and they were a great trouble to the farmers and shepherds. Once the men of the North revolted, but Edgar ravaged their land; and some say it was he, and not Edred, that gave the Lothians to Kenneth to govern.

In 973 Edgar was solemnly crowned. Some say that the reason he had not been crowned before was that he had done an evil thing. When he repented and confessed his sin, the archbishop had told him that he should not be crowned for seven years, as a sign of repentance. However this was, it is certain that there was a very grand feast; and after it Edgar went with his fleet to Chester. There he was met by the kings over whom he was overlord—five Welsh kings, and Kenneth, the King of Scots, and the Underking of Cumberland, and the Danish king of the Southern Isles. These eight rowed him on the river in his barge, and he sat and steered. So Edgar had greater state than ever any English king had held before. Even the Danish kings of Dublin bowed to him, and money was struck there in his name. Every year while Edgar lived his fleet sailed round England to guard it; so that no foes could land without a fight.

When he was dead there began evil days for the English, so that men looked back to his reign when there were peace and good laws. Edgar, like all great kings, was very careful about good laws, and, with the help of Dunstan and the Wise Men of England, he made many such, and saw that they were kept, and any one who broke them was sternly punished. Once the men of Thanet plundered some foreign merchants; and when Edgar heard of it he sent an army to punish them, and laid waste all their island.

In his days Peterborough was built up again, which Wolfere had founded, but

it had fallen into decay through the long Danish wars. He made it so rich with precious gifts and lands that it was called the Golden Borough.

Many stories are told about Edgar which, if they were true, would make him not a very good man: but whether they be true or not, he was certainly a good king, and ruled his people well, if he could not always rule himself. He was a little man, but very strong, and afraid of nothing. One day while the king of Scotland was sitting at drink with his men, he said, "Wonderful it is to me that so many lands should obey one little man." A certain minstrel heard this, and told it to Edgar, mocking him. When Edgar heard it, he sent for Kenneth, saying that he had certain matters to say to him alone. When he came he took him into a wood apart, and brought out two swords, and gave Kenneth one of them, saying, "Now let us try which of us is the best man, and see whether I am unfit to rule taller men than myself. Neither shalt thou leave this wood till we have proved this; for unkingly it is to say that at a feast which thou wouldst not hold to in a fray." And Kenneth was astonished, and fell at his feet, and prayed his forgiveness, saying that he had spoken but in jest. Then Edgar was content, and forgave him.

There is another story told of Edgar which, though if not perhaps true, yet there was a ballad about it, and it is a famous story. There was a beautiful lady in Edgar's days whose name was Elfthrith, and the fame of her beauty was so great that the king heard of it. So he sent a friend of his, whose name was Ethelwold, to ask her hand for him of her father. But when Ethelwold saw her, he fell in love with her himself; so he told the king that she was not so fair as people had said, and instead of the king's marrying her he married her himself. After some time the truth was told the king, and he was very wroth; but he did not show it, and spoke kindly to Ethelwold, and told him he would come and see him. When Ethelwold heard that, he was sore afraid. So he went home and told his wife Elfthrith the whole truth, and begged her to make herself as ugly as she could, and dress herself in mean raiment, that the king might not suspect his deceit. But she was very angry because he had prevented her from being a king's wife; so when the king came to the house of Ethelwold, she dressed herself in fine raiment and made herself look as handsome as she could. When the king saw how fair she was, he was the more angry, and while he was hunting with Ethelwold he thrust a spear through him so that he died.

Ethelwold had a son before he married Elfthrith, and the young man was by when his father was slain. When the king saw him, he said to him, "What think you of this kind of hunting?" for he was very angry. And the young man answered, "My lord, how should I be displeased at what pleases you?" The king was pleased with his ready answer, and his anger left him. Afterward he was very kind to him, and gave him great gifts, that he might atone for the slaying of his father. Edgar sent for Elfthrith and married her, so that she became a king's wife after all. She founded a house for nuns, also, where Ethelwold was slain, that the sin of Edgar might not fall upon her.—Frederick York-Powell, *Early England.*

VII. Edward the Martyr, A.D. 975–979.

When Edgar died he left two sons. Elfthrith was the mother of the younger, whose name was Ethelred; the name of the other was Edward. By his will he desired that Edward should be king; and though Elfthrith wished that her little son, who was only seven years old, should be king, Dunstan and the Wise Men

chose Edward. Before he was crowned there arose a great quarrel between the North and South of England about the monks; for Elfhere, alderman of the English March, drove out the monks and filled their places with simple priests; but the great aldermen of Essex and East England gathered a host to defend them. It was the Northern folk that had helped Edgar against his brother; so now they stood out for Edward, while the Southern folk wished for Ethelred. But Dunstan and Oswald, the two archbishops, prevented a war, though Elfhere did many evil deeds against the monks all the days of Edward.

There were many meetings of the great men of England throughout this reign to try and settle things peacefully. At one of these a strange thing happened: While the elders of England were sitting together in an upper chamber, the floor suddenly fell, save one beam on which Dunstan was standing. So he was not hurt; but of the others some were sore hurt and others killed. After this men believed more in Dunstan than they did before, for they thought that God had kept him from harm for a sign to them.

In 979 an evil deed was done, so that the song of that day says, "No worse deed was done among the English since they first sought the land of Britain." It is said that it happened in this way: Edward had been out hunting, and as he was riding home weary from the chase, he came near the house of his step-mother, and rode to it. There she met him and received him well, and gave him to drink, for he was very thirsty; but as he was drinking she bid one of her followers stab him in the back, and he did so. When the king felt that he was wounded, he spurred his horse and rode off as fast as he could; but he was so faint that he could not sit in his saddle. So he fell off, and his foot caught the stirrup, and he was dragged along by the frightened horse through the rugged wood till he died. Men said that Elfthrith and Elfhere had plotted to slay him as they best could. But Edward was held a martyr; and soon Elfthrith repented her of her evil deed, and went into a house of nuns, where she stayed all her days praying for the forgiveness of her sins. Elfhere afterward brought the body of the king in great state to Shaftesbury Minster, which Alfred had built. Soon after he died of a dreadful disease, and men said God so punished him for his sin.

Edward is said to have been a good king on earth, and after his death a saint in heaven. He was fair to look on, like most of the men of his race.—FREDERICK YORK-POWELL, *Early England.*

VIII. DUNSTAN.

Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, monk and statesman, was born at Glastonbury A.D. 925. He early entered into holy orders, and by means of his relative, Archbishop Athelm, was introduced at court, where he acquired great influence over the kings Athelstan and Edmund. He was afterward, however, persecuted on account of his independent spirit, and an austerity which had excited the anger of King Edwin and of Ethelred. He was exiled for some time in Flanders, but was, on his return, made Bishop of London, and finally Archbishop of Canterbury in 961. He died May 19, 988. He was canonized as a saint, and is commemorated on the 19th of May. He was well versed in the arts and sciences. The *Congregation of Benedictines of St. Dunstan*, which he founded, spread rapidly after 957. Writers differ greatly in their estimates of Dunstan's character. It is clear, however, that he was "a man of extraordinary talents, of great energy, stern self-will, and unscrupulous purpose; and that he exerted all his talents, energy, and unscrupulousness to advance the ecclesiastical power, and to subject all to papal

supremacy. The grand designs of his life, namely, the complete subjugation and conformity of the Anglo-Saxon Church to that of Rome, and the extension and multiplication of ecclesiastical interests, are not such as excite the admiration of modern times, and all discerning people will regret the success that attended the unpatriotic labors of the saint. That he *was* successful there can be no manner of doubt. Though personally out of favor at court in the latter years of his life, his efforts to spread his official influence were unceasing. At an early period in his career he had introduced a new order of monks into the land, the Benedictines, whose strict discipline had changed the character and condition of ecclesiastical affairs, and, in spite of the confusion and even opposition thus caused, he persevered to the end. Monasteries continued to be founded or endowed in every part of the kingdom; and such were the multitudes who devoted themselves to the cloister, that the foreboding of the wise Bede was at length accomplished—above a third of the property of the land was in possession of the Church, and exempted from taxes and military service."—M'Clintock & Strong's *Cyclopædia.*

The following are some of the events in his early career:—

There is a very close resemblance between the life of St. Dunstan and that of the still more famous Thomas à Beckett, and we shall perceive that the methods of gaining influence over the common mind were the same in both cases, and pursued for the same purpose. He was presented to King Athelstane when he had just taken the clerical habit, and soon gained his majesty's affections by the variety and excellence of his accomplishments. He painted and carved; he worked in gold and precious stones; he wrote the most wonderful hand, and illustrated books with the most beautiful designs; and, above all, he composed the sweetest of tunes and sang the merriest of songs, accompanying himself on almost any instrument then known. Some people have supposed that he was also a ventriloquist, and availed himself of his powers of mimicry to make certain sounds appear to come from a harp which he hung up on the wall. But the deceit was found out by the enmity of the other courtiers, and Dunstan was turned out of the court. He went down to the church at Glastonbury, built a small cell, and coiled himself up in it, to the surprise of the beholders. All his gay doings were forgotten, as if they had never been. He wore hair shirts, and inflicted penances on himself, and fasted so much and slept so little that the Evil Spirit began to tempt him in hopes of interrupting so holy a life. He put his ill-omened countenance through the little hole that gave light to the cell, and began some depreciating remarks; but Dunstan, who happened to be hammering some iron at the time, caught the visitor's nose in his red-hot tongs, and squeezed it till the enemy of mankind confessed himself defeated, and howled to be let go. Now it began to be whispered abroad that miracles had heralded the holy Dunstan's birth, and surrounded him in his youth, and expectation rose high of the grandeur of his future career.

Fuller than any one else of these expectations was Dunstan himself. Edmund, the king, thought that so powerful a champion should not be left in so humble a position, and made him abbot of Glastonbury. Edred would not be left behind his brother in recognizing such merits, and offered to make him a bishop. Dunstan refused, and the king did not renew the offer. Immediately there was spread a report, by the holy man himself, that three of the apostles had appeared to him, and rebuked him for his folly in rejecting the poor see of Crediton, and commanding him to accept it if he had the chance given him once more, and not even to

say "no" if the king asked him to accept the Archbishopric of Canterbury. In proof of the reality of the visit and of the serious nature of their indignation, the repentant abbot showed the marks on his back which the rods of St. Peter and the other apostles had left. Edred, moved perhaps by this extraordinary manifestation of the heavenly will, sent for the abbot, and made him his guide and counselor in the affairs of State. Dunstan had only two objects in life—to introduce the new doctrine of celibacy among the clergy, and spread the papal power. Up to this time the English clergy married if they chose, though the popular prejudice against matrimony was skillfully kept up by the monks and the Pope. And a fortunate thing it is that they for a while succeeded in their design; for if the powerful office-bearers of the Church had been allowed to wed, they would soon have degenerated into a hereditary priesthood, in imitation of the hereditary nobility; and the endowments of the Church would have been taken from the people at large to swell the revenues of a few influential families.—WHITE'S *History of England.*

IX. Changes under the Great Kings.

Under the great English kings many changes had come about in England, which had made it different from England as it was in the days of the small kingdoms. First, the Church had brought men together. Moreover, the monks, who lived together in large houses, with great lands round them, had kept alive the learning which King Alfred restored, and had taught the English many useful things, so that building and the arts and trades were all improved. The monks, too, were great gardeners, and brought into England many new herbs and plants which were useful for medicine or for food.

Next, the kings had grown more powerful; for not only did they rule over a people instead of over a tribe, as they had done at first, but they had got greater power over their people, and were more looked up to. Edward and Ethelstan had divided the Marchland into shires, for the old tribe kingdoms in the Marchland had been swept over by the Danes and their governments destroyed. So these kings divided the land round the great towns which they had fortified, and put a *sheriff* or shire-steward over each shire by the side of the *alderman* to look after its rule. The towns, too, had grown more important, and more people dwelt in them. Moreover, now that so many kingdoms were joined together, there was one great council which helped the king to govern the land. This council was made up of the wise and great men out of all England, and was above all the little councils which each small kingdom and each shire had. Over it the king and the archbishop presided, just as the bishop and the alderman and sheriff presided at the shire-meetings or folk-meetings. This great council was called the Witenagemote, or Meeting of the Wise Men.

It met usually once or twice a year, and made laws and chose the kings, and if a king behaved badly, turned him out and put another in.

The great men of the kingdom were different, too, from what they had been. The officers of the king's household became great nobles, and the servants of the king became nobles also; so that the nobles were no more called *eorls*, but *thanes*, that is to say, servants. It was no longer gentle birth that made men nobles, but service done to the king. Out of these thanes the king and the Wise Men chose the sheriffs and the aldermen for the shires and under-kingdoms. The nobles, too, had grown more powerful, for many poor men sought the help of them and their followers, and to gain this they gave their lands to the nobles, who gave

them back to them on condition that they worked for them; so that few small men now held their lands quite freely.

In the villages and small towns the old family feeling of the clan had died out; and the villagers often made clubs, which managed their business, as the old council of elders had done. These clubs were called *guilds*. They were made for helping each other, and for safety against robbers and the like. They held a pastime in every year, which became the village feast.

The coming of the Danes and their settling among the English helped also to change England. It bound the English more together, for they were all obliged to work together against their common foe. The Danes stirred up the minds of the English among whom they settled, for they were more active and restless than they. They also prevented the English where they settled from becoming too much the servants of the great men, for they were too fond of their freedom to let it go easily.—FREDERICK YORK-POWELL, *Early England.*

EARLY SAXON KINGS.

FROM 827 A. D. TO 1017 A. D.—190 YEARS. 15 KINGS.

NINTH CENTURY.	A. D.
Egbert	827
Ethelwulf	836
Ethelbald	858
Ethelbert	860
Ethelred I.	866
Alfred	871

TENTH CENTURY.	A. D.
Edward the Elder	901
Athelstan	925
Edmund I.	940
Edred	946
Edwy	955
Edgar	958
Edward the Martyr	975
Ethelred II., the Unready	979

ELEVENTH CENTURY.

Edmund II. (Ironside.).....A. D. 1016.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ANGLO-DANISH PERIOD.

I. The Danish Conquest.

GUIDE ANALYSIS.

I. Reign of Ethelred II.
   1. Effect of Dunstan's policy as shown in the weakness of national defense.
   2. Incursions of the Danes, and their massacre.

II. Sweyn, King of Denmark, and Canute.
   1. Sweyn's conquest of England.
   2. Invasion of Canute.
   3. Death of Ethelred.
   4. Edmond Ironside divides the kingdom with Canute.

III. Accession of Canute after the Death of Edmund.
   1. The principal acts of his reign.
   2. His character.
   3. His devotion to the Church.
   4. Emma, Queen of Canute. Result of her harshness to her sons by Ethelred.

IV. End of the Danish Occupation.
   1. Reign of Harold Harefoot.
   2. Reign of Hardi-Canute.

We have seen that the history of England for a long term of years is a record of constant struggles against the fierce inroads of the Danes. We have passed their time of plunder and of local settlement; and we have glanced swiftly over the period when the Saxons breathed secure from their incursions. We have yet to take a hurried view of the victorious invasion and settlement of this race of northern barbarians. From the obscurity that hangs over this period there shines forth a great name—Canute. He who bore this name was at once king of Denmark and Sweden and Norway and England. He was called "Canute the Great," and "Canute the Rich," and, though only a little beyond the age of forty when he died, he had for years been called "Canute the Old." Threescore years and ten could hardly have been regarded as the measure of a king's life in those turbulent times. It has been said of Canute that prosperity softened but did not corrupt him, and that he is one of the few conquerors whose greater and better qualities were developed in peace.

I. Reign of Ethelred II.

Ethelred obtained, from the enmity of the archbishop, the depreciatory name of "the Unready," and appeared to fulfill a curse which the prelate had uttered against him on his coronation day, by the calamities of which he was constantly the victim, and sometimes the cause. The public attention had been so occupied with the great ecclesiastic dispute, that the defense of the nation against foreign enemies had been neglected for many years. It was now found that the

triumphs of Dunstan had so filled the land with monks that there was a scarcity of able-bodied laymen either to fight or plow. Vast numbers had shaved their heads, and sunk into the useless security of the cloister, who might have been relied on with bow and spear, when the danger, long threatened, at last drew near. The Norsemen were again upon the sea, and, having established a powerful State on the opposite shore, under the name of the Dukedom of Normandy, were determined to make themselves masters of the unprotected and monk-ridden England in the same way.

Year after year the demands of the pirates rose. They were bought off with sums of money; first they were content with ten thousand pounds of silver, then with sixteen thousand, then with twenty-four, and at last they refused to retire from their prey unless they were bribed with forty-eight thousand pounds. These do not seem very large sums at the present time, but we are to remember that five pounds' weight of silver would purchase a hundred acres of land. It was worth forty oxen, or two hundred and fifty sheep. The sums, therefore, exacted by the invaders in the ten years of Ethelred's reign, from 991, may be considered equal to ten or twelve millions sterling. Add to this the damage they did during their stay, the farms they ruined, the towns they burned, the treasures they seized, and you may safely double or treble the amount; for the destruction of agriculture is a far greater calamity than the mere seizure of money, and spreads its effects all over the years required to recover its former state. A tax was raised throughout the country by the name of the Dane-geld, to satisfy these rapacious visitors, and winter quarters and maintenance were assigned to several detachments of them which delayed their departure till the spring. The ancient Danish settlers on the north and north-east of the Thames were by this time, we have seen, scarcely distinguishable from their Anglo-Saxon neighbors. They married and were buried together; they attended the same church, and spoke the same language. Nevertheless, it is possible that they were more leniently treated by the new swarms of their countrymen, and that their resistance to them was not so decided as if they had been of an altogether different stock. The rage of the Anglo-Saxons took the form of a massacre such as is rarely met in history, and, in spite of the exaggerations surrounding the details, we cannot doubt the horror of the event.

On the thirteenth of November, 1002, we are told that every-where—in town and village, farm and castle—the prepared Saxons rose upon the unprepared Danes, and put them to death. Old and young, mother and bride, boy and girl, all were doomed to death; and some have gone so far as to say that there was not one Dane left alive. In some places where the pirates had created more than usual hostility, it is likely the outraged Saxons slew all of them they could reach. In many cases, too, the foreign mercenary whom the king himself had placed in the Anglo-Saxon cottage to insure the fidelity of his subjects, and who had used his opportunity to oppress and insult the proprietors of the house, may have fallen a victim to the revenge of the father or husband; but it is utterly impossible that so scattered and so ignorant a race as the Anglo-Saxons should have had the secresy and combination necessary for so great an act; and we are reduced to believe that an outbreak of popular fury, which undoubtedly occurred in various localities, took the form, in the ballads of both the populations, of a wholesale slaughter; and that St. Brice, on whose festival the event took place, became a cry of proud recollection to the Saxons, and of vengeance to the Danes.—WHITE'S *History of England.*

II. Sweyn, King of Denmark, and Canute.

The revenge came very soon. The Baltic coast sent forth its warriors in greater numbers than before. Ethelred was deceived by his flatterers, and forsaken by his chiefs. When efforts were made and a fleet collected, quarrels broke out among the leaders; the ships were deserted, and wrecked upon the shore. A large army of the enemy besieged Canterbury. Alphege, the archbishop, resisted to the last; but treachery opened the gates, and the inhabitants were sold as slaves. A party of the triumphant Danes were celebrating their success, and ordered the prelate to be brought before them. "We must have ransom," they cried. "Gold, bishop! gold!" But Alphege said he had no wealth of his own, and would rather die than allow his flock to impoverish itself by purchasing his release. The drunken revelers cast the relics of their feast at the old man's head, and massacred him amid shouts of derision. They only extinguished one feeble life, but gave a martyr to the Saxon Church, before whose shrine their descendants in the next generation were kneeling in deepest veneration. The prey was now thought to be too valuable to be left to the hands of subordinate chieftains, and Sweyn, the King of Denmark, embarked with a royal army, and attempted the conquest of the kingdom. When the men of the Danelagh saw the ancient standard of their race, and reflected at the same time on the powerlessness of their nominal sovereign, they professed their allegiance to the invader, and deserted Ethelred's cause. Sweyn left his son, Canute, in charge of the ships and shore, and marched triumphantly through the land. Every-where the Danish element in the population united itself to his fortunes—a clear proof that the massacre of 1002 was not so universal as we are told; and at last the Saxon king, who was equally unready to fight or die, fled with his wife, Emma, to her brother's dukedom of Normandy, and Sweyn was accepted as undisputed monarch of the land from the Solway to the Channel.—White's *History of England.*

III. Accession of Canute.

Yet when the first fear of the Danish invasion was passed, the old Saxon affection for the line of Woden returned. Emissaries were sent over to invite Ethelred to return, on condition of better government for the future; and as Sweyn's death had removed the greatest difficulty in the way of his restoration, the Unready came back to contest the prize with Canute, whom the Danes had nominated to the crown. Fortunately the national cause was intrusted to a stronger champion, when the death of Ethelred opened the way for his illegitimate son, Edmund, a man whose strength was so great that he is known by the homely name of Ironside, and whose courage and conduct were equal to his bodily force. He challenged Canute to decide the quarrel by single combat; but who could have any chance against a man that could perform such feats as Edmund, who could cleave trees asunder with his sword, and tire down a horse on foot? Canute declined the invitation to fight, but suggested a division of the kingdom, as had been practiced before; and his proposal was accepted amid the rejoicing shouts of both armies. But before the terms of the agreement could be fully carried out, the iron-sided warrior died, and Canute was installed in the undivided kingdom, as if he had been the natural heir.

Affecting a moderation he did not possess, Canute endeavored to soothe the alarm of the nation by promises of mercy and justice. His acts, however, soon

belied his words. He put all the relations of the late royal family to death, or forced them into banishment. Two princes, the sons of Edmund Ironside, he sent to the King of Sweden, with a request that he would deliver him from such dangerous opponents. The Swede was more pitiful than the Dane, and sent them to the distant court of Hungary, to keep them out of Canute's power. Edward and Alfred, the sons of Ethelred and Emma, were protected by her brother, Richard, at Rouen, and were likely in a few years to be personally dangerous; but Canute took the surest means of disarming their mother's enmity, for he made her an offer of his hand: and when Emma felt herself again a queen of England, and mother of a prince who might hope to succeed his father, she turned bitterly against her sons by Ethelred, and made them feel that they had no country beyond the territories of their uncle. They grew up accordingly more Norman than English, and Emma's unnatural harshness was in this way the not very remote cause, as we shall see, of the Norman conquest.

Prosperity had the same softening effect on the character of Canute which labor and suffering had had on that of Alfred. The rude Dane forgot to be bloody in the midst of an obedient people, and made himself popular in a way very unusual with kings—by writing songs and ballads, which spread into hall and cottage. One of his verses is still preserved, and as it is said to have been a favorite among the English peasantry, we may conclude that Canute had paid them the additional compliment of adopting their language as the vehicle of his poem. He was rowed by some of his attendants on the river Renne, in the neighborhood of the great cathedral of Ely, and as the psalmody of the monks reached his ear, he sang:—

Merie singen the muches binnen E—ly,
Tha Cnut Ching rew there by,
Roweth, cnihtes, near the land,
And here we these munches soeng.

In modern spelling we can judge of the royal poet:—

Merrily sang the monks of Ely,
When King Canute rowed thereby,
Row, my men, the land a near,
And the monks' singing let us hear.

His popularity, however, is better shown by the less authentic story of his rebuke to his admirers, who told him there was no limit to his power. He placed his chair within the reach of high-water, and ordered the advancing tide to retire. When the waves came on, he turned to his sycophants, and exposed their flatteries and meanness. This anecdote is never omitted in the life of Canute; and, in spite of the exceeding improbability of a middle-aged gentleman exposing himself to be drenched by the increasing water for the mere purpose of conveying a lesson which nobody required, it has become a fact of the most indubitable kind, and on a slab recently inserted in the wall of a house near the shore at Southampton, the words appear: "Here Canute reprimanded his courtiers."

The firmness of his power was shown within a very few years. He left his new acquisition in 1019, and remained a whole year in Denmark, carrying on a successful war with Sweden and Norway. The latter of these he subdued and annexed to the Danish crown; and after a long interval of repose at home and honors abroad, he completed his character of a Christian king by a pilgrimage to Rome. Here he was received with extraordinary respect by the Pontiff and

several potentates, including the German Cæsar, who happened to be in the city at the time. They gave him vases of silver, and other marks of consideration; but he obtained more valuable proofs of the papal and imperial friendship in a promise that his clergy should be no longer oppressed by Romish exactions, nor pilgrims insulted and robbed in their passage through the States of the emperor. Delighted with all he heard and saw, the Dane came back to England more zealous in support of the Church than ever, and presented to the shrine of Coventry the arm-bones of St. Augustine, which he had bought at Pavia for a thousand talents of silver and a thousand talents of gold. If the talent of gold represented eleven hundred pounds sterling, and a talent of silver seventy-five, this relic of the Bishop of Hippo, who died in 430, cost, probably, three or four years' amount of the whole revenue of England. It is surprising that this purchaser of sacred treasures, and builder of churches, and bestower of tithes, escaped canonization when he died, in 1035.—WHITE'S *History of England.*

Mr. Powell takes a different view of Canute's life and character :—

Canute began his reign by trying to settle his English kingdom, for of all the kingdoms that he had then and afterward he loved England the best. First he outlawed those of the English blood-royal that were in England; and when the Wise Men gave him the care of the children of Edmund Ironside, he sent them to Sweden, to his half-brother, King James. It is said that he asked him to slay them; for he would not slay them himself, for the brotherhood that he had sworn with their father. But King James would not: and sent them to Stephen, who was the first Christian king of Hungary, that he might take care of them. And they abode a long time at his court.

Canute set earls as governors over the land; but he kept Wessex himself, for there he chiefly lived. He gave the Marchland to Edric; to Thorkell he gave East England; to Eric, when he had married his sister, he gave Northumberland; and these great men ruled the land under him. But Edric was angry because the king did not give him more power, and it is said that he told the king that he had slain Edmund Ironside for his sake. When Canute heard these words, he bid his followers slay Edric, saying that he who had betrayed his lord for lands and gold would never be faithful to him. So Edric was slain in the king's sight, and was cast out of the window into the river that ran below. Men held that Canute had done very rightly, for through the evil deeds of Edric many good men had met their death; and he was so crafty and powerful that he was able to do much evil. Canute also soon sent Thorkell from England into Denmark, for he was so great a man that he feared lest he should do evil.

In the same year, 1017, Canute sent to Normandy and asked the duke to give him Emma, Ethelred's widow, in marriage, for she had fled thither with her children. He did so; and Emma came back and was again Lady of the English; and she bore Canute two children, Gunhild and Hardi-Canute. Gunhild married King Henry, who was afterward made emperor; but Hardi-Canute became king.

Canute now set two Englishmen in power, who became very famous men—Leofric and Godwin. Leofric was made Earl of the Marchmen, and Godwin was made Earl of Wessex, under the king. Leofric was a good man, and tried to make peace in England whenever the great men fell out. Godwin was a very wise man, and became the greatest man in England next the king, and his sons

became earls as well as himself. Canute was so pleased at his wisdom and bravery in a war which he had in the Baltic, one time when he was away from England, that he singled him out and trusted him with an earldom.

Canute was not only King of England and Denmark, but he also drove out the King of Norway, and was chosen king there also; and over the Swedish king his will had great weight. The Scots also acknowledged him as their overlord; but he had to make war with them for attacking England while he was away at Rome. Then they made peace and submitted to his commands.

Canute went twice to Rome, it is said, to atone for his evil deeds. While he was there, in 1027, he wrote a long letter home to the English people, in which he told them all about his journey and the kings whom he had met, and how he had spoken with the Pope. He also promised to rule them well, and never take money unjustly from them, and to make all his great men do right also. He said, too, that he had never spared any trouble for his people's good, and that he never would. These promises he fulfilled; for though he had done some cruel things to the great men, he had never done harm to his people since he was made king. He set good laws very strictly against all evil-doers, so that in after-days his name became famous as as a lawgiver. To the Church he was very open-handed, and he gave a splendid altar-covering, embroidered with peacocks, to Glastonbury, where the body of King Edmund Ironside lay. He built a church at Assandun, and set Stigand, who afterward became a famous man, to pray and preach in it. This he did as a token of thankfulness and remembrance of the battle that he had fought there. Canute was a great friend of the monks also.

It is said that when Emma's brother was dead, his son, Duke Robert, who soon after reigned in Normandy, gathered together a fleet to conquer England, drive out Canute, and put on the throne Emma's two sons, who were still in Normandy; but the weather was bad, and such of the ships as were not destroyed were obliged to put back.

Canute was a little man, but strong of body, and exceedingly wise and crafty, so that no man knew his real mind. He was very good to strangers, but careful of his money, and not fond of useless spending, for he was not willing to burden his people. He was more loved by the English than by the Danes, for he set Englishmen, and not Danes, as earls in England; and he would not suffer the Danes to spoil England as they wished, but he ruled as an English king, and not like a foreign conqueror. He was fond of music and singing, and made verses. One day, while he was being rowed in his barge to Ely, he heard the song of the monks at their service in the minster ringing across the water, so he made a song:—

"Merry the monks of Ely sing
As by them rows Canute the king—
Row, men, to the land more near,
That we these good monks' song may hear.

Other verses also he put to it; and this song was held in remembrance by the monks of Ely, for he was a good friend to them, and gave them many gifts.

He was a very godly man at the end of his reign. It is told of him that one day he ordered his chair to be set on the sand by the sea when it was low water. When the tide began to rise, he spoke to the sea and forbade it to rise; but the water rose till it washed round his chair and wet his feet and garments. Then he arose and said to those that were with him, "Though kings be mighty and rule wide realms, yet will not the seas obey them; therefore to God alone be honor

and praise, for he rules all things, and the wind and the seas obey him." This he did as an example, lest men should honor man and forget God who made them. And never after that day would he wear his crown; but he set it on the head of the image of Jesus on the cross that was in the old church at Winchester.

Canute was very fond of hunting, and made laws that no man should hunt in the lands which were under the care of the king.

Canute kept a great many men always about him, like a little army, and men came from all the North lands to serve in his guards, so that there were not in all the world at that time such soldiers as they. He made rules for them also, that all things might be done in order; and it was by help of this guard that he was able to do such great deeds in war. He sent to Denmark many English priests, who taught his own people several English customs which he thought would be useful to them; for the English were not so rude a folk as the Danes were.—FREDERICK YORK-POWELL, *Early England.*

IV. END OF THE DANISH OCCUPATION.

On hearing of his step-father's death, Edward, the elder son of Ethelred, who had waited his time in the Court of Normandy, put to sea with a few adherents, and laid claim to the vacant throne. He marched with all speed toward the residence of his mother, Emma, relying on her support. But Emma was his bitterest enemy. She was engaged in furthering the success of her son by Canute, who was known as Hardicanute, but was unfortunately at that time in Denmark. Edward, always pusillanimous and easily daunted, fled to his ships when he discovered his mother's hatred, and became more Norman in his feelings than before. His brother, Alfred, was more unfortunate. Emma beguiled him over by promises of aid, and when he landed on the Kentish coast with five or six hundred retainers, he was waited on by Earl Godwin on her behalf, and welcomed to the kingdom. When his followers, however, were skillfully divided into small parties, after they had amicably marched across to Guildford, they were arrested as enemies of the crown; the common soldiers were tortured and put to death, and Alfred was blinded with brutal violence, and died of the operation. Harold, an illegitimate son of Canute, was now apparently without a rival, for England had been left to him by his father's will; Norway was bequeathed to his illegitimate brother, Sweyn; while Hardicanute, the legitimate son of Emma, was appointed to the crown of Denmark.

Emma fled to Flanders when Harold was elected, and was joined at Bruges by Hardicanute. The mother and son had not long to wait, for after an inglorious reign of four years, chiefly devoted to hunting, in which agility gained him the name of Harefoot, he made way for his brother's claims.

Hardicanute seemed in no hurry to urge his claims by force. He waited so long in Denmark, in ostensibly preparing his forces, but in reality in gluttony and drunkenness of the most outrageous kind, that the ambitious mother began to despair of his success. It was only when he had torn himself from his festivals in the North, and was astonishing the Flemings with his powers of drinking at Bruges, that a deputation from England saved him all further trouble by making him an offer of the crown. Over he came, feasting and carousing all the way, and soon showed that a tipsy king is more expensive than a warlike one. He reimposed the old Dane-geld, which had been raised to resist or buy off his countrymen's invasions, to pay for his wine and beer. He ate and drank his way

through all the taxes, and laid heavy burdens even on the Church. Rebellion, probably, would have ensued, but luckily one night, in celebrating the marriage of one of his lords, he proposed so many toasts, and drained so many bumpers, that at last his majesty fell speechless on the floor. The flagon was still in his hand, but he was unmistakably dead—a warning to both Danes and Saxons, who were the most drunken people in the world, that excess brings its own punishment.

And now came an incident which gives us a curious view of the state of national feeling among the Danes and English, and shows us that the struggles for royalty we have been reading of since the death of Ethelred were very different from the conquest of one people by another, and the imposition of the conqueror as king. The throne was ostensibly elective; and even when a strong competitor like Canute had an army at his beck, the form of nomination was gone through. The Danish party was predominant, and as long as the lineal descendants of Canute remained, there would probably have been a competition at each demise of the crown between the Danish and Saxon pretenders. But on the death of Hardicanute there was no legitimate heir to Canute's authority—and the whole nation—Danes and Anglo-Saxons—elected Edward, the son of Ethelred and Emma; as if, on the extinction of the intrusive family, the rights of the old Anglo-Saxon branch revived; and the Danish monarchy, after lasting twenty-five years, (from 1017 to 1042,) came peaceably to an end.—WHITE'S *History of England.*

II. The Saxon Dynasty Restored.

GUIDE ANALYSIS.

I. EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.
1. His connection with house of Godwin.
2. His failure in maintaining Saxon independence.
3. His character.

II. HAROLD II.
1. Chief events of his reign.
2. Battle of Hastings.
3. His death and burial.

The Saxon dynasty was restored in the person of Edward, surnamed the Confessor, and with him ended the legitimate lineage of the Anglo-Saxon kings—the race of Cerdic, the King of Wessex, which had ruled the land for more than five hundred years. After the death of Edward there still remained a "few stormy months of Saxon times—a disputed succession, brief and tumultuous—an unsteady tenure of the throne, and a bloody death" at the battle of Hastings. Thus ended the Saxon period.

I. EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

When Hardi-Canute died, Edward, his half-brother, was chosen king. This was chiefly done by the help of Godwin and his men; for some would have had Sweyn, King of Denmark, cousin of Hardi-Canute, as king. Many of those who had been against Edward were outlawed when he became king. Edward took away a good part of his mother Emma's riches because she had not helped him in his need; but he suffered her to live quietly at Winchester.

In 1045 Edward married Edith, Godwin's daughter, and thus bound himself

closer to the house of Godwin. At this time the three greatest men in England were Godwin, Leofric, and Siward the Big, the Earl of Northumberland; and they ruled all England under the king. But Edward did not long remain friendly to the house of Godwin; for he was too fond of foreigners, and especially of the Normans, and from this arose great trouble afterward.

There was now reigning in Norway King Magnus, who had been a friend of Hardi Canute. They two had agreed that whichever of them died first, the other should have his kingdom. When Magnus got neither Denmark nor England, he was angry, and gathered a great fleet to come to England; but Sweyn, the Danish king, stopped him; so the English fleet which Edward had summoned had nothing to do.

Godwin had many children: and of these the two eldest, Sweyn and Harold, were now earls in England—Harold over the East English, and Sweyn over the West border over against the Welsh. Sweyn kept his earldom well, and defeated the Welsh when they attacked the English; but in 1046 he took the Abbess of Leominster away from her abbey, and wished to marry her. This shocked people very much, because it was against the laws of the Church; so he was forced to leave England and went off to Flanders, and his earldom was given to Harold, his brother, and to his cousin Biorn, or Bear, brother of Sweyn, King of Denmark, who had had an earldom in the middle of England. After he had been away but a little while he came home and prayed the king to forgive him and give him back his earldom. But Harold and Biorn would not give up the rule of it to him, so the king would not let him stay in England. Then Sweyn enticed Biorn to come on board his ship, and go with him to plead for him to the king. But when Biorn was on board, he slew him. For this evil deed Sweyn was outlawed by all the people, and most of his friends forsook him; and Harold had Biorn buried in great honor. But Sweyn repented of the treacherous deed that he had done in his wrath, and the good Bishop Eldred prayed the king and the Wise Men to forgive him; so he was inlawed, and his earldom was given back to him.

Now, Sweyn, King of Denmark, and King Edward were friends; for they were related through the house of Godwin, and Sweyn had helped Edward against Magnus; but King Magnus gathered another great host against Sweyn, so that he was hard put to it to hold his own. So he sent to pray Edward to help him. Godwin spoke for his kinsman, and would have fifty ships sent; but Leofric and most of the Wise Men were against this. So no help was sent to Sweyn; but when Henry, the emperor, quarreled with Baldwin of Flanders, the English sent him help. Sweyn was driven from his kingdom; but Magnus died not long after, and his uncle, Harold Hardrada, (the stern of counsel,) who had reigned with him part of his reign, reigned alone in his stead. Then Sweyn soon got back his kingdom.

In Wales about this time there were two great kings called Griffith, who were nearly always fighting against each other and against the English. While Sweyn, Godwin's son was away, the South Welsh king joined the fleet of the Danish sea-rovers and made a raid into England. But Eldred gathered together against them all the men who dwelt on the border; but the Welsh that were with him turned upon him and joined their brethren when the battle began, and he was defeated and most of his men slain.

In 1050 Edward made Robert, a Norman monk, Archbishop of Canterbury. He had before been Bishop of London. He was a great foe to Godwin and his house, so that he filled the ears of the king with stories against them. By his advice

many Normans were set in bishopries and high places in England. They did no good, but built castles and strongholds, that they might be safe against any attack from the English, and could oppress them as they would.

One day the king's brother-in-law, Eustace, who was a Frenchman, had been to see the king, and was riding back to the sea to pass over to his own earldom of Boulogne. When he and his men came to Dover, they behaved lawlessly, and wished to make the townsmen lodge them where they would; and one of them struck a townsman. Then a fight began, and many were slain on either side; but at last the men of Dover drove them out of the town. Then Eustace rode back to the king and complained of the Dover folk, and told the story his own way. The king was very angry, and bid Godwin the earl go and punish them. But Godwin said he would not till they also had been heard, and he told the king that the Frenchmen ought to be punished. Then the king sent for Leofric and Siward; and Godwin summoned his folk, and it was like to have come to a battle between the two armies. But Leofric thought it better that the Wise Men should be called together to settle the matter. When the Wise Men met, they outlawed Sweyn again, and called Godwin and Harold, his son, to come alone before them, but they would not come unless safe-conducts were given them. So the Wise Men outlawed Godwin and his kin. Then Godwin, Sweyn, and Gurth, his sons, went to Flanders, where Tostig, another son of his, had just been married to Judith, Baldwin's daughter. But Harold went to Ireland, to Dermot, King of Leinster, a great friend of the house of Godwin. And Edward sent his wife, Godwin's daughter, into a nunnery, and Harold's earldom he gave to Elfgar, Leofric's son.

While Godwin was away, William, Duke of Normandy, came to visit Edward in England, and the king, who was childless, is said then to have promised him the kingdom at his death. This William came to the dukedom when he was but seven years old, after his father, Robert, who died while he was away on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He had hard work to keep his dukedom when he was young, for the Norman nobles were very proud and restless, and looked down on him because his mother was the daughter of a tanner. And when he grew older, his neighbor, the King of France, coveted his duchy, though at first he had helped him, because he thought he could do as he liked, seeing that William was so young. But by his great skill and bravery he had overcome all his foes, and was now one of the greatest men of the age. He was very tall and strong, and a strict but just ruler, who had the gift of choosing good men for his servants, unlike Edward in this. He was very good to the Church, and built splendid minsters. But he was very stern, and when he wished any thing he would have it, and recked of no man or thing that stood in his way. He was very fond of hunting, and passed as much of his time as he could spare in that sport. He was a great archer, and his bow few men but he could bend. In this taste Edward was like him; for though he was a pious man, he thought more of hunting than any thing else but the Church.

Things went ill while Godwin was away. Griffith of North Wales broke into England and did much damage; and Harold ravaged the South coast. At last Godwin and Harold gathered a great fleet and sailed to London; and the king gathered all the men he could against them. But Stigand proposed, as before, that the Wise Men should judge between them. They inlawed Godwin and his kin, and the queen was taken back by the king. But Robert the Norman and the Frenchmen, whom Edward loved, took horse when they heard this news, and

rode through London, cutting and hewing at all in their way till they got to the river; then they took ship and went to Normandy. Stigand was made archbishop in Robert's room, for he was a great friend of Godwin. But Robert was very angry at this, and never ceased complaining to the Pope and the duke and the princes abroad of the loss which he had suffered. And as he told the story his own way, many thought the English had done wrong, and that they were impious folk.

Soon after this, in 1053, it is said that Godwin was sitting at meat with the king, and the king was being served by Harold and Tostig, Godwin's sons. One of them slipped, and the other helped him. Then said Godwin, "So brother helps brother." But the king said, "My brother would have helped me hadst thou not slain him." And Godwin said, "If I slew thy brother or had a hand in his death, may this piece of bread choke me." Then he broke a piece of bread and put it in his mouth, but it stuck in his throat and choked him, and he fell down and never spoke again. And all men marveled that the words which he had spoken were fulfilled. Then the king bid them cast his body out like a dog's, for his false oath and his evil deed. But this story is told by the Normans, who hated Godwin, and it is not likely to be true. The English mourned greatly for Godwin, for he upheld England, and did right while he ruled, and advised the king well; and he hated the foreigners, whom they also hated. Now that he was dead, all men's eyes were turned to Harold, and he was made Earl of Wessex after his father, and had the greatest power all Edward's days, so that no man did any thing against his will, and he advised the king well.

In those days Macbeth slew King Duncan, and became King of all Scotland in his place. But Duncan's kin went to Siward the Big, who received them well, and fought for Malcolm against Macbeth. In the end Macbeth was slain, and Malcolm Big-head became King of Scotland. In 1055 Siward died. When he felt that his death was near, he arose from his bed, and called for his coat of mail, and put it on, and took his sword in his hand, and died so, sitting in his chair; for he said he would not die like a cow, but like a soldier in mail. His earldom was given to Tostig, Godwin's son, for Waltheof the Big, Siward's son, was as yet a child.

About this time Earl Elfgar, son of Leofric, was twice outlawed, and twice he got the Welsh king to join him in attacking England. But peace was made by his father, who soon after died; and Griffith, King of Wales, married Elfgar's daughter, Edith. Earl Harold was at this time on a pilgrimage to Rome.

And now Edward, son of Edmund Ironside, and his children, came home to England. But he died soon after he landed, and his children were brought up by the king.

In 1063 there was a great war with Griffith, the Welsh king, who was now King of all Wales, for he would not keep the peace, but plundered the English border; so Harold and Tostig went against him with a fleet and an army. At last they beat him, and he bowed to the English king. But his own folk slew him soon after, because of the trouble he had brought upon them. His head and the prow of his ship were sent to King Edward; and his realm was given to his brothers, and they swore to be faithful to the English king.

About this time Harold was out in a ship with his brother, and was driven to the coast of France. The earl of the place where he was wrecked put him in prison. But William, the Norman duke, made the earl set Harold free, and brought him to his court. There he stayed some while, and helped William in his

war against the people of Brittany. And William made him swear that he would help him to be King of England when Edward died, and Harold had to swear this, for he was in William's power.

Soon Tostig and the Northumbrians fell out, for they were a very wild and lawless folk, and Tostig was overstern, and at last slew some of them at a feast to which he bid them. So the men of Northumberland chose Morcar, Elfgar's son, to be their earl in Tostig's stead. Then Tostig went to King Edward, to pray for his help; for Edward and Edith loved him best of all the house of Godwin. And Edwin, Morcar's brother, who had succeeded his father Elfgar in his earldom, brought an army of Marchmen and Welshmen to help Morcar. Harold tried to make peace, and get the Northumberland men who had marched south to take back Tostig: but they would not. When the Wise Men judged the matter, they outlawed Tostig: and he went away to Baldwin, his father-in-law; but Edward was very wroth at this.

In 1066 Edward died, and he was buried in Westminster Abbey, which he had built. And all men held him a saint, and he was called *Confessor*, for his zeal for the Church. Edward was a handsome man, of good presence: his hair and his beard were white as snow. He was very pious, and did his best to rule well, and in his days England was mighty and at peace from foreign foes. But he was weak, and often took bad advice: he was quick-tempered also, and, through this, sometimes unjust. But men loved his memory, for they remembered the good days when he was a king in the evil days that fell on England after his death.—FREDERICK YORK-POWELL, *Early England*.

II. HAROLD II.

Before Edward died he advised the Wise Men to choose Harold king after him, and they did so, and Eldred, Archbishop of York, crowned him king. Soon after, he married Griffith's widow, the sister of Edwin and Morcar. When William heard of this he was so angry that he could hardly speak, for he remembered the promise of King Edward and the oath that Harold had sworn. And he determined to be King of England and thrust Harold out. So he persuaded his nobles to join him; and he fitted out a large fleet, and hired soldiers from all parts till he had a large army. And he sent to the Pope and told him how Harold had broken his oaths. Also, he promised the Pope great gifts and much gold when he became King of England, if he would bless his enterprise. The Pope, hearing these things and the complaints of Robert, and all the evil stories that the Normans told of the English and the house of Godwin, blessed William's undertaking, and sent him a holy banner.

Harold, also, gathered a large fleet to defend England, and it is said that the two fleets fought a battle, and that the English drove the Normans back.

When Harold was made king, Tostig went to William to ask help to get back his earldom, which Harold would not give him. But William would promise nothing; so he went on to the King of Sweden and prayed him to try and conquer England, as his kinsman Canute had done. But Sweyn said he had much ado to keep Denmark. Then Tostig went to Harold Hardrada, King of Norway, and prayed him to try and conquer England, which had been promised to his nephew Magnus. Harold Hardrada at last consented; though some of his great men advised him not to try this great deed and jeopard his life and kingdom; for they said the guard of Harold, Godwin's son, were the best soldiers in the world, and that one of them was as good as any two other men.

King Harold Hardrada was a very famous warrior: he had fought by the side of his brother when he was only fourteen, and was wounded in the great battle where he fell. He had passed a great part of his youth in Russia, where kings of Swedish blood then ruled. Afterward he had gone into the service of the Emperor of the East at Constantinople, and had commanded his guards. He had been to Jerusalem also, and fought with the heathen in the Mediterranean, and had slain a great snake or crocodile. He was a very big man, and wise as well as brave; and he was so strong and active that there were few men his match. He was also very rich, for he had brought great spoil from his sea-roving; and he got great riches while he served the Emperor of the East.

Harold, with a great fleet, set sail for the Orkneys, and Tostig met him off Northumberland. They landed at the Tyne-mouth, a mighty host. Then Edwin and Morcar met them; but Harold beat them in a fierce fight, and the men of York then made peace with him.

But when Harold, Godwin's son, heard of this, he gathered his guard and such men as he could, and marched north up the Roman Way against his brother and the king of Norway. He came on them unawares, as most of the Northmen were at their ships, and those that were with the king and Tostig had not their coats of mail on, for the day was very hot. When the English host came in sight, Tostig counseled Harold to go back to the ships to the rest of the army and fight the English there. But Harold Hardrada would not give way, but he sent messengers to Eystein, his marshal, to bring up his men. Then he rode through his host on a black horse and set his men in array. As he rode, his horse slipped and he fell; but he got up and said a verse from an old song, "A fall is lucky for a traveler." But when Harold, Godwin's son, saw him fall and knew who it was, he said, "That is a big man and fair of face, but his luck has left him." Then he and a few men with him rode between the two hosts up to the Northmen's army, and called out, "Is Tostig, Godwin's son, here?" And Tostig came forth. Then he said, "Harold offers Tostig peace and a third of his kingdom, for he would not that brother should fight brother." Tostig answered, "What shall be given to Harold of Norway for his journey hither?" And Harold said, "Seven feet of English ground, or a foot over, for he is taller than other men." But Tostig answered, "It shall never be said that Tostig left his friends in the lurch for the offers of his foes. We will either win England by our swords, or die here like men."

Now, Harold Hardrada was by them and heard all that was said, and he asked who it was that spoke so well. Tostig told him, "It was my brother Harold." Then said the king, "If I had known this, he should not have gone back to tell of our folks' death." But Tostig said, "He did unwisely in this; but I might not betray my brother who offered me such great things; and I would that he should slay me than I him, if one of us two must die." Harold Hardrada said to them that were with him, "That was a little man, but he sat well in his stirrups." Then he put on his coat of mail and took his sword in both hands, and stood in front of his banner, which was called Land Waster. And the English fell upon the Northmen; but they kept their array till the fight waxed so fierce that they grew too eager and broke their ranks. Then the English drove them back to the river Derwent behind them, and they fell back across the river as well as they could. And the English pressed hard on them. But one Northman kept the bridge against the English till most of his fellows were across, and many Englishmen he slew, till one got under the bridge thrust up a spear through

the plank, and it struck him under the belt, and then he fell. When the English got over the bridge, the Northmen formed up again, and King Harold Hardrada went in front of his host, and fought so fiercely that no man could stand before him, for he slew all that he could strike at. At last an arrow hit him in the throat over his mail coat, and that was his death-wound. Then Tostig went up to the banner in his place. Harold, Godwin's son, again offered his brother peace and quarter to the Northmen. But they all cried out, "We will take no peace from the English, but rather fall one man over another where we stand." And now Eystein came up from the ships, and the fiercest fight began, and the English were hard put to it, till the Northmen grew so wroth that they threw down their shields and fought like madmen. But the English kept cool and fought on warily; and at last, when Tostig and the chief men were slain, the Northmen gave way and fled to their ships. And it was now evening. Next day Harold, Godwin's son, made peace with Harold's sons. Then they put to sea and went back home. And Harold, King of England, went to York and kept a feast there.

Four days after this battle William landed with all his host at Pevensey, for the English fleet was up North with Harold. He set up a castle of wood at Hastings, and ravaged the land all round. When news of this was brought to Harold, he marched South to London with his guard, bidding Edwin and Morcar gather their men and follow him. But they held back; for they thought that if Harold was slain they would share England with William. Then Harold gathered the men of Kent and of London and many country folk, and marched from London to Senlac, near Hastings, and lay on the hill there by a hoar apple-tree. There were with him Gurth and Leofwin, his brothers, and most of his kin. Gurth begged Harold to lay waste the land, that William might not get food or march on, and then go back himself to London and gather forces there and leave him to fight William, instead of Harold, because of the oath which Harold had sworn. But Harold said, "I was made king to cherish this folk: how shall I lay waste this land of theirs? Nor does it befit an English king to turn from his foes. But thy advice is wise."

Now William and his men lay in the open land below. And both hosts made ready for the fight that was to be fought on the morrow. The English spent the night watching by their fires, singing merrily, and eating and drinking. The Normans did not feast; but Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, William's brother, went through the host praying with the men. On the morrow both hosts were set in array. Harold had made a strong pale of stakes along the front of his line, and in the center, by his two standards, (the golden dragon of England, and his own with the image of a fighting-man on it,) he set his guard and the men of Kent and London. They were all armed in coats of mail, and had great two-handed axes and broadswords and javelins. But at the back and sides of the hill he put his worst soldiers and the country folk, who were ill armed with darts and slings and clubs. The English all fought on foot, as was the custom in the North. Harold bid his men keep the pale and drive off their enemies; but he told them not to leave their posts, or the Normans would get inside and drive them off the hill.

William set his men in order also. In the midst he and his brother were, with the Norman knights, all on horseback, clad in coats of mail, with long lances in their hands and broadswords by their sides; there, too, was the banner which the Pope had hallowed. In front were the archers, of whom he had a great many,

but they were on foot. On the right he put the French knights who were with him, and on the left the men of Brittany; for he was overlord of Brittany. The first man that began the attack was a Norman minstrel, who rode up against the English, throwing up his sword and catching it, and singing a war-song of Charles the Great Emperor's mighty deeds. He slew two Englishmen who came forth against him before he was slain himself. Then the battle was joined. The Normans charged up against the English; but the English kept the pale, and cut down man and horse with their great axes. In vain the Normans tried twice over to break their line. Then they began to give back, and men cried out that William was slain; but he threw off his helmet, that all might know him, and cried, "I live, and will yet win the day, by God's help!" And he and his brother Odo again got their men in array and charged again up the hill. William and Odo fought ever foremost, and at last they got close up to the English standards. Gurth threw a spear at William, which missed him and slew his horse. But William slew Gurth with his sword; there fell also Leofwin, his brother, and many Normans and English. But the Normans got on best on the right, for there they broke down the pale.

Then William, to make the English leave their post, ordered his men to pretend to flee. And when the English saw them turn, they disobeyed Harold, and rushed down after them, leaving the hill bare. Then the Normans turned and smote them in the open field, and pressed on to the hill-top, where Harold and his guard were nearly alone; but though they were now fighting on level ground they could not drive back Harold and his guards. So William ordered his archers to shoot up into the air, that the arrows might fall upon the English; for they could not use their shields, as they had both hands to their axes. One arrow struck Harold in the eye, and he fell dying at the foot of his standard. Then the Normans made a last rush, beat off the English, and broke down the standards, and Eustace and three other knights slew Harold as he lay on the ground, and mangled his body. But the English drew off, fighting to the last; and many of the Normans that followed them were slain, for they turned on them in a swampy place, where their horses were of no use.

William pitched his tent among the dead on the height where the standards had stood, and his host stayed there all night. Next day there came many English women to bury their dead, for William gave them leave; but though Harold's mother offered the weight in gold for his body, he would not give it her. But when it was found, mangled under a heap of dead, by an English lady—Edith Swan's-neck, whom Harold had dearly loved—he bid them bury it under a stone-heap on the cliffs, for he said, "He kept the shore well while he lived; let him keep it now he is dead."

So fell the last Old-English king fighting against the foreigners. And after a while William was chosen king of the English, for there was no man now that could withstand his might; and Edgar, the son of Edward Etheling, Edmund Ironside's son, whom some would have made king, was hardly old or wise enough to rule, even if they could have driven out William.

Harold was a good king, and ruled well during his short reign. He was a very active man, and never rested when any thing was to be done. He was very just, too, and he was much beloved by the English for his good rule, and the way in which he put down the Welsh and forced them into peace. But, like his father, he did not get on well with the Church; for he disliked Edward's foreign priests and bishops, and did not favor the monks. It shows what a good ruler the En-

glish must have thought him that they made him king; though he was not of the royal blood of the English kings who sprung from Woden, whom men worshiped in the heathen days, but only of kin to the Danish kings.—FREDERICK YORK-POWELL'S *Early England.*

A COURSE OF READING FOR THE ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD.

I. IN GENERAL.

The works of J. M. Kemble are to be preferred to every other for the advanced student.

Edward Freeman's "Old English History" is exceedingly pleasant reading.

The reader should not overlook John Thrupp's "Anglo-Saxon Home."

Sharon Turner's "History of the Anglo-Saxons," and Sir Francis Palgrave's "England During the Anglo-Saxon Period," are works of great value and interest.

The general reader will find Hume and Knight quite full in many points of Anglo-Saxon history.

II. SPECIAL.

EARLY SAXON PERIOD.

1. See an account of the "Saxon Heptarchy," in chapter xxxviii of Gibbon's "Rome."

2. In connection with the history of the "Spiritual Conquest of the Saxons," read Ælfric's homily on the birth-day of St. Gregory. This will be found among the prose selections of the Anglo-Saxon period of literature.

3. The literary interest of the early Saxon period centers in the history of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. In Lappenberg's "History of England under the Anglo-Saxon Kings," translated by Thorpe, is to be found perhaps the best argument for the historic reality of this famous British prince. Cox, on the other hand, in his "Popular Romances of the Middle Ages," presents with great force the opposite view. He claims that the Arthur of mediæval romance is altogether a mythical personage, and points out remarkable resemblances between the legends of the Round Table and the myths of other nations. For the story of Arthur's life see Bullfinch's "Age of Chivalry," or Geoffrey Monmouth's "Chronicles." Then read one or more of the following works:—

Sir Thomas Mallory's "Morte d'Arthur."
Spenser's "Faerie Queen."
Chaucer's "Wife of Bath's Tale."
Scott's "Bride of Tierny."
Bulwer's "King Arthur."
Tennyson's "Idylls of the King;" "Morte d'Arthur;" "Lady of Shallott," and "Sir Galahad."
Wordsworth's "Egyptian Maid."
Lowell's "Vision of Sir Launfal."

LATER SAXON PERIOD.

1. The hero of the period is Alfred the Truth-teller. His history is well followed in Hughes' "Life of King Alfred."

but they were on foot. On the right he put the French knights who were with him, and on the left the men of Brittany; for he was overlord of Brittany. The first man that began the attack was a Norman minstrel, who rode up against the English, throwing up his sword and catching it, and singing a war-song of Charles the Great Emperor's mighty deeds. He slew two Englishmen who came forth against him before he was slain himself. Then the battle was joined. The Normans charged up against the English; but the English kept the pale, and cut down man and horse with their great axes. In vain the Normans tried twice over to break their line. Then they began to give back, and men cried out that William was slain; but he threw off his helmet, that all might know him, and cried, "I live, and will yet win the day, by God's help!" And he and his brother Odo again got their men in array and charged again up the hill. William and Odo fought ever foremost, and at last they got close up to the English standards. Gurth threw a spear at William, which missed him and slew his horse. But William slew Gurth with his sword; there fell also Leofwin, his brother, and many Normans and English. But the Normans got on best on the right, for there they broke down the pale.

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CHAPTER V.

THE SAXON PERIOD.

Political, Social, and Religious Institutions.

When the Saxons possessed themselves of the southern part of Britain they were bands of fierce pirates. They were an idolatrous and superstitious people; courageous, bearing trouble and danger without flinching, but "habitually cruel." Sharon Turner says of their condition at this time, that "the human character has seldom displayed qualities more inauspicious to the improvement of intellect or of moral character." Yet from such ancestors the English nation has been formed. The history of this nation is the history of progressive refinement. It is a subject of deep interest to trace the various agencies which, working upon the hearts and habits of the Saxons, produced the first gradation of that progress; but it is far too large a subject to be considered here. We can only notice briefly the change in the character of the Saxons as shown in their manners and customs. In looking at these one cannot help being struck with the small beginnings of great social and political institutions.

I. Government and Laws.

DISTINCTION OF RANKS.

The king was the head of the nation. At first, he was simply an elected leader for some difficult enterprise, but in course of time such a leader acquired royal power. As head of the nation, the king had the power of summoning and directing the proceedings of the great national council, called the Witanagemot; he had also the right of appointing all public officers, disposing of the public lands, and of holding property in forests, tolls, wrecks, etc. The kingly office was elective, not hereditary; but it was the rule to choose a member of the royal family. The king's wife was at first called queen; but after the time of Eadburga, wife of Brihtric of Wessex, who poisoned her royal husband, she was named the lady. Members of the royal family were called Ethelings.

The next in rank to the king were the Earldermen or earls. They were the higher nobles, and governed districts called shires. In the time of Canute the name alderman was changed to earl or jarl. His duty was to lead the men of his shire to battle, to sit with the bishop in the County Court, and to enforce justice.

Below the earls were two classes of freemen, Thanes and Ceorls. The Thanes were the owners of the land, and were either men of good birth or successful ceorls. Five hides of land (about 600 acres) was the least a thane could hold; if his estate became less than this, he fell to the rank of ceorl. The thanes were dependent upon the higher nobles, and accompanied them to battle.

The Ceorls, or yeomanry, were the cultivators of the land. A ceorl might rise to the rank of thane if he possessed five hides of land or made three voyages in his own ship. He had the right to wear long hair and carry arms—privileges which distinguished him from the servile class.

The lowest rank of all was the servile class. These were called theows, thralls, or serfs, and were made up of descendants of the conquered Britons, prisoners taken in war, criminals who could not pay their fines, and the very poor, who wanted support in a famine, and sold themselves. In the later Saxon times freemen were kidnapped and sold as slaves. The serfs were sold with the land and cattle. They were sometimes given in barter instead of money, their value being usually reckoned as four times that of an ox; and their owner could treat them like cattle. A slave might become a freeman if his master willed it. In such a case, the proper officer put into his hand a sword or a spear, and told him to go where he liked. When a freeman fell to the rank of a serf, he publicly laid aside his lance or sword, knelt down before his new master, and then took up the bill or goad as emblem of service.

At the time of the Norman conquest there were about 25,000 of this class.

THE WITANAGEMOT.

This was the great council of the nation, or the assembly of the wise men, which met in one of the royal cities at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide. It was composed of the king, the chief nobles, prelates, abbots, and leading thanes, and answered to our modern Parliament. The members were not elected; they attended by right. The duties of the Witan were to make new laws; to impose taxes; to make peace or war; to elect a king; to appoint bishops; to grant lands; to act as the supreme court of justice.

COURTS OF JUSTICE.

The greater nobles had the right of trying cases of a simple kind which arose in their district. This court was usually held in the lord's hall, and was therefore called the Hall-mote. Offenses of a graver character were tried in the Hundred-mote, which sat once a month, under the presidency of the alderman, or chief officer of the hundred.

The highest court of all was the Shire-mote, or County Court, which was held twice a year, and presided over by the alderman and bishop.

MODES OF TRIAL.

A person accused of a crime might clear himself either by compurgation or by ordeal. The first method consisted in bringing forward a certain number of persons to assert upon oath their belief in the innocence of the accused. The worth of one's oath depended upon social rank. Thus a thane's word was as valuable as that of six ceorls, and an earl's evidence might outweigh that of a whole township.

The trial by ordeal was really an appeal to the judgment of God, in the belief that heaven would defend the right. There were three kinds of ordeal; the hot

water, the hot iron, and the corsned or consecrated bread. In the hot-water ordeal the accused person thrust the hand into a vessel of boiling water. The hand was then carefully bandaged for three days, and if it healed during that time the accused was pronounced innocent. In the hot-iron ordeal a piece of heated iron was carried nine feet in the naked hand, which was then bandaged as in the former case, and innocence or guilt was decided in the same manner. The corsned was a piece of consecrated bread given to the accused to eat, and if it appeared to stick in his throat, or if he shook or turned pale in the attempt to swallow it, his guilt was said to be proved.

PUNISHMENTS.

The most common punishment was the imposition of a fine. Almost all offenses could be atoned for by the payment of money. Every man's life had a certain value, called his were-gild; so that if a person were killed other than willfully his representatives received from the culprit the appointed were. The were depended upon the rank of the person; thus, the were-gild of a ceorl was two hundred shillings; of a lesser thane, six hundred shillings; of a greater thane, twelve hundred; of an earl, twice as much, etc. A certain value was also placed upon different parts of the body, so that injury to any part could be atoned for by a fine. It must be remembered that failure to pay these fines reduced a free man to the state of slavery.

There were certain crimes always visited with death. These were willful murder, open theft, high treason, and housebreaking. The usual mode of execution was hanging. Besides fines and death, there were other punishments in use: as whipping, imprisonment outlawry, branding, the pillory, cutting off a limb, mutilation of the nose, ears, and lips, plucking out the eyes, and tearing off the hair.

DIVISIONS OF THE COUNTRY AND LAND.

The country was divided into counties or shires, hundreds, and tithings, but when, and by whom, cannot be determined. We must bear in mind that each band of conquering Saxons formed a little army, and that each man received a share of the conquered land. The allotment was usually about thirty-three acres. Every ten families formed a tithing, ten tithings constituted a hundred, and an uncertain number of hundreds formed a shire. As the people settled down, the tithings and hundreds pointed out the divisions of land, not so many families. The land given out to private persons as settlements was called Bocland; that is, land held by bok or book. Before writing became common, the land was given in the presence of witnesses by handing over to the new possessor some symbol, as a staff, a horn, a twig, or a piece of turf. In York Minster may be seen now the horn which was given in Saxon times with the lands forming the early endowment of that Church.

Certain lands were kept for the benefit of the people at large, and these were called Folkland, or the land of the people.—Morris' *History of England.*

II. Social Institutions.

SOCIETY, FOOD, AMUSEMENTS.

It is difficult to paint the home life of England in those old Anglo-Saxon centuries. The reproach of the fifteenth century and our own, that no people are better fed or worse housed, was probably true then. The noble lived in a hall

intended, not for defense, but for hospitality, with a chapel attached, and out buildings for his followers. Hunting and hawking, in woods carefully preserved, occupied the days of peace. Asser relates with wonder that Alfred let his sons learn reading before they were taught hunting and such like "human arts;" and although the grim statesmen of that reign, who groaned in their old age over the alphabet which their master constrained them to study, were probably the last specimens of complete ignorance in the highest places, there is no reason to suppose that book learning ever flourished much among the Anglo-Saxons. Songs and legends were their literature; the laws of their country their philosophy; attendance at mass and at the different gemots made up the whole duty of their civic lives. The worst consequences of this speculative inactivity, to a people naturally coarse and gross, was that they sunk into evil from the mere want of employment; and the vices of the table prevailed in forms too disgusting to be described. That the poor lived plentifully in good years is probable; the land was rich, and the food simple, barley or oaten-bread, beer, and pork being the common fare; but England no longer exported corn, and famines were frequent and terrible. There were large herring fisheries along the east and south coast, and Eaton in Cheshire paid the rent of a thousand salmon to its Norman earl. The vineyards which the Romans had planted survived Saxon and Dane; Gloucestershire was famous for them, and Smithfield was once ruddy with grapes. But gardens were of slow growth, and comparatively few fruits and vegetables had been naturalized. The trade in wool, the only article which was certainly exported to the continent, enhanced the value of sheep, but cattle and horses were probably more prized in themselves, and were certainly more costly in proportion, perhaps because they were more difficult to rear. With large tracts of moor and morass, and with uniform forests with one or two varieties of tree, the country in Anglo-Saxon times was less beautiful than it has since become under cultivation; and the system of fallows, while it covered a large portion with patches, interposed a wide interval between different homesteads. Adders and other reptiles swarmed in the woods, wolves and thieves lurked in the covert, and the traveler went armed on his journey. Yet from some points the aspects of life were more cheerful and picturesque than they are now. The portion of daily labor exacted from the working man was as much as human toil could accomplish; but the working days were fewer, less was done in the winter months, and saint-days and Sundays were mercifully interspersed in the seasons of fair weather. Games of every sort were the lawful amusements of idle hours and festivals; we have lost infinitely more from the Saxon book of sports than we have added to it. It is melancholy to know that in the eighth century a laboring man was disgraced among his fellows if he could not sing to the harp, and to consider that one of the noblest arts has died out in the class that most need to be refined.

DRESS.

In another respect, the love of dress, we have less to fear from a comparison; though whether our taste is improved may, perhaps, be questionable. The Saxons seem to have adopted the Roman tunic, which reached to the knees, and to have completed it by long sleeves for the arms. A cloak over it was added for out-of-doors. The Anglo-Saxon lady wore a hood with long pendants, and a loose dress reaching to the ground. Wool and flax, with silk for the lappets and the eyelet holes, were the common materials, which the wearer herself would sometimes embroider. Bracelets and rings were favorite ornaments; and both

sexes delighted in bright colors. Unfortunately, they extended this to the use of pigments for the complexion; and rouge was as much a part of the furniture of a Saxon lady's toilette-table as the crisping-irons. The abuse of colored dresses even invaded the sanctuary and the cloister; Charlemagne was scandalized at the laxity of English discipline, and Alcuin and Aldhelm inveighed with apostolic vehemence against the guilty fashion. But history tells us that it was not stemmed by the joint authority of two saints and an emperor: and the English monks in the times of the Norman conquest were still sinners in gay dress against the rigid rules of their order. Unluckily, our ancestors were fonder of dress than of cleanliness: the warm bath, indeed, was a luxury, but the cold bath was a penance of the Church; and the Danes are accused of having won the affections of English ladies by combing their hair, by bathing once a week, by frequent changes of clothing, and "such like frivolities." Yet as an ivory comb and tweezers or scissors were among the treasures buried with St. Cuthbert, we may hope that Englishmen of rank were as frivolous in these matters as the Danes.—PEARSON'S *History of England.*

III. THEIR RELIGION.

The spiritual conquest of the Saxons has already been mentioned. Soon after they became converts to the Christian faith they sent missionaries to spread its consolations among the people of neighboring nations. "We have an intimation," says Sharon Turner, "of the plan of instruction which they adopted for the change of the pagan mind, in the directions of Alcuin for a progressive information."

This order should be pursued in teaching mature persons: 1. They should be instructed in the immortality of the soul; in the future life; in its retribution of good and evil, and in the eternal duration of both conditions. 2. They should then be informed for what sins and crimes they will have to suffer with the devil everlasting punishments, and for what good and beneficial deeds they will enjoy unceasing glory with Christ. 3. The faith of the Holy Trinity is then to be most diligently taught; and the coming of our Saviour into the world for the salvation of the human race. Afterward impress the mystery of his passion; the truth of his resurrection; his glorious ascension; his future advent to judge all nations, and the resurrection of our bodies. Thus prepared and strengthened, the man may be baptized.

The following points of some of the religious "rites and notions" of the Saxons are selected from Sharon Turner's "History of the Anglo-Saxons":—

MONASTERIES.

The monastic scheme which the Anglo-Saxons adopted was that of St. Benedict; and it is impossible to read his rule without perceiving that it was the product of a mind aiming to do what seemed wisest and best. For above a century the Anglo-Saxons warmly patronized monasteries.

The ravages of the Danish invaders, who, being martial pagans, exulted in burning Christian churches and cloisters, destroyed many monastic establish-

ments: and though Alfred, by his example, encouraged the taste of building them, few were erected again till the reign of Edgar. Dunstan led his young mind to become their earnest patron; and the zeal for re-establishing them on the reformed plan, which had been adopted at Fleury, in France, urged both the sovereign and his mitred preceptor to the greatest violences against the then existing clergy. Ethelwold, whom Dunstan procured to be made a bishop, had land given him for making a translation of the Latin Rule of St. Benedict into the Anglo-Saxon; and it was the boast of the king and his council that they had founded forty monasteries by their exertions.

The monastic establishments of Edgar were effected with too much violence and injustice to have good results: the truth is as old as the world, though rarely palatable to it, that evil means will have evil consequences. The former clergy were driven into an irascible opposition against the new system, and the discords which ensued from it among the nobles and nation led to the second series of Danish invasions. From these so many disorders followed, that both monks and clergy declined into that low state of morals and mind from which the Norman conquest afterward rescued the religion of the country.

The form of the hierarchy established among the Anglo-Saxons was episcopal. An archbishop, and bishops subordinate to him, and receiving the confirmation of their dignity, or their spiritual investiture, from the Pope, were the rulers of the Church; yet subject, both to their own national as well as to general councils, and also in many points to the Witena-gemot, of which they were a part, and, in their temporal concerns, to the king. Under the episcopal aristocracy, deans, archdeacons, canons, prebend, and the parochial clergy, enjoyed various powers and privileges. The monks and nuns were governed by their own abbots, abbesses, and priors, assisted, and, in some respects, controlled, by conventual chapters; subject to, yet not always submitting to, the Pope, and claiming an independence of the episcopal clergy. There were no friars or mendicant orders among the Anglo-Saxons; but they encouraged hermits and pilgrims, and severe penances, and loved relics, and enervated saints, to whose number they largely contributed; and they practiced excommunications.

READING OF THE SCRIPTURES.

They were strongly exhorted to study the Scriptures. In this essential point the Anglo-Saxon Church formed a remarkable contrast to the Roman Catholic hierarchy of the subsequent ages, and to its present conduct: instead of withholding its sacred volumes, the clergy of Anglo-Saxon England earnestly pressed their frequent perusal, and gave the example in themselves. Bede employed himself, like our Alfred, in making moral and religious selections from them, and also commented on each of their books. Alcuin repeatedly presses their perusal, especially the Gospels; and urges the contemplation of our Saviour's life and precepts. His high and just estimate of the Psalms is very interestingly expressed. Every priest was ordered to have the "halzan bec," the sacred books, that "he might teach his people rightly who looked up to him;" and he was to take care that they were well written.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

It is certain that the transubstantiation of the Eucharist was not the established or universal belief of the Anglo-Saxons. In a MS. of Saxon Ecclesiastical

Constitutions, it is declared, "The sacrament is Christ's body, *not bodily, but spiritually;* not the body in which he suffered, but the body about which he spoke when he blessed the loaf and wine."

MORAL DUTIES OF THEIR CLERGY.

That the Anglo-Saxons were not contented with mere ceremonial religion, the lives and works of Aldhelm, Bede, Alcuin, Elfric, and others abundantly show. The character which Alcuin expected from an Anglo-Saxon archbishop of Canterbury he has thus drawn at full length, in a letter to one that was his contemporary:—

"Be the comforter of the wretched, a father to the poor, and affable to all, that you may understand what you are to answer, and let your answers be always seasoned with wisdom; never rash, but honorable; not verbose, but moderate. Let your manners excel in courtesy, be praised for their humility, and be amiable for their piety. Teach not only by words, but by examples, all who live with you, or may visit you. Let your hand be liberal in alms, ready to requite, and frugal in receiving. Provide yourself with treasure in heaven. Make your wealth the redemption of your soul. It is more blessed to give than to receive. Have the Scriptures often in your hands. Be assiduous in prayer. Let virtue dignify your life, and impressive preaching your faith and hope."

LEGAL DUTIES ENJOINED TO THEIR PRIESTS.

They were forbidden to carry any controversy among themselves to a lay tribunal. Their own companions were to settle it, or the bishop was to determine it.

No priest was to forsake the church to which he was consecrated, nor to intermeddle with the rights of others, nor to take the scholar of another. He was to learn sedulously his own handicraft, and not put another to shame for his ignorance, but to teach him better. The high-born were not to despise the less-born, nor any to be unrighteous or covetous dealers. He was to baptize whenever required, and to abolish all heathendom and witchcraft. They were to take care of their churches, and apply exclusively to their sacred duties; and not to indulge in idle speech, or idle deeds, or excessive drinking, nor to let dogs come within their church inclosure, nor more swine than a man might govern.

They were to celebrate mass only in churches, and on the altar, unless in cases of extreme sickness. They were to have at mass their corporalis garment, and the subucula under their alba; and all their officiating garments were to be woven. Each was to have a good and right book. No one was to celebrate mass, unless fasting, and unless he had one to make responses; nor more than three times a day; nor unless he had, for the Eucharist, pure bread, wine, and water. The cup was to be of something molten, not of wood. No woman was to come near the altar during mass. The bell was to be rung at the proper time.

They were to preach every Sunday to the people, and always to give good examples. They were ordered to teach youth with care, and to draw them to some craft. They were to distribute alms, and urge the people to give them, and to sing the psalms during the distribution, and to exhort the poor to intercede for the donors. They were forbidden to swear, and were to avoid ordeals. They were to recommend confession, penitence, and compensation; to administer sacrament to the sick, and to anoint him if he desired it; and the priest was always to keep oil for this purpose and for baptism. He was neither to hunt, or hawk, or dice, but to play with his book, as became his condition.

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THEIR IDEAS OF HEAVEN.

The future world is thus painted in another of the Anglo-Saxon homilies :—

Let us reflect on the happiness we may lose. Let us resolve to earn that brightest of all places, and that most beautiful felicity, with angels and high-angels, and with all the sainted ones in the rapture of heaven's kingdom. There it will last forever. There is eternal life. There is the King of all kings, and the Ruler of all rulers, and the Creator of all creatures. There is peace without sorrow, light without darkness, and joy without an end. There will be the beginning of everlasting happiness; the beauty and delight of all that is holy; youth without age; the inexhaustible glory of the spirit in the highest splendor; peace and comfort; health unvarying; a most blissful throne; the most lovely fruits, and the most exalted power.

THEIR PENITENTIARY SYSTEMS.

The laws of Edgar record the penances imposed for various crimes. Mr. Turner tells us that what they called their "deep-like or severe penance," is thus recorded :—

He must lay aside his weapons, and travel barefoot a long way, nor be sheltered for a night. He must fast and watch and pray both day and night, and willingly weary himself, and be so careless of his dress that the iron should not come to his hair or nails. He must not enter a warm bath, nor a soft bed; nor eat flesh, nor any thing by which he can be intoxicated; nor may he go inside of a church, but seek some holy place, and confess his guilt, and pray for intercession. He must kiss no man, but be always grieving for his sins.

The law thus provided for the liberty to buy off penance :—

A man may redeem one day's fasting by a penny, or by repeating two hundred Psalms. He may redeem a twelve months' fasting by thirty shillings, or may set a man free who is of that worth. And for one day's fast he may sing the Beati Immaculati, and six Paternosters; or for a day's fast he may kneel and bend sixty times to the earth, with a Paternoster; or he may bend all his limbs to God, and fifteen times sing Miserere mei Dominus and fifteen Paternosters.*

ANGLO-SAXON PRAYERS.

O Lord beloved!
O God our judge!
Hear me:
Everlasting Ruler!
I know that my soul
With sins is wounded.
Heal thou it,
O Governor of life!
For thou most easily may,
Physician of us all!—
Of all that exist,
Far or wide.
I beseech thee now,
Lord of heaven!
And pray to thee,
Best of human born,
That thou pity me,
Mighty Lord!
High King of heaven!
And the Holy Spirit;

* Leges Edgari.

And aid me,
Father Almighty,
That I thy will
May perform,
Before from this frail life
I depart.
Refuse me not,
Lord of Glory!

But grant me,
Blessed, illustrious King!
Permit me with angels
Up to ascend,
To sit in the sky;
And praise the God of heaven
With the tongues of the holy,
World without end. Amen.

The following are selections from the Latin prayers that are found at the end of every Psalm in the Saxon and Latin Psalter:

O Lord! our King, and our God! propitious, hearken unto the voice of thy petitioners. Deign to hear them devoutly approaching thee in the morning hour, that through the greatness of thy mercy, and cleansed from all the stain of sins, we may enter thy house, and every-where sing thy praises in thy fear.

O Lord! our strength, and the horn of our salvation! impart to us the fervor of thy love, that our minds may love thee with unwearied affection; and by the effect of this attachment to thee may be turned toward our neighbor with benignity, through, etc.

O Lord, our King! who continueth forever; to whom all the earth is deservedly resounding with the voices of praise, and singing thy glory and honor; grant, we beseech thee, strength to thy people, against the evils of the present day, that we may enjoy prosperity here, and trust in thine eternal promises hereafter, through, etc.

Purify, O Lord our God! our heart and reins by the fire of the Holy Spirit, that we may serve thee in chastity of heart and body. Free us from all vice, and have mercy upon us, whom thou hast redeemed by thy inestimable intercourse.

Despise not our contrite and humble heart; and by the ineffable power of the Trinity may there be the testimony of the One Divinity that, strengthened by the Father, renewed by the Son, and guarded by the Holy Spirit, we may rejoice in thee.

CHAPTER VI.

ANGLO-SAXON LITERATURE.

The Anglo-Saxon language was the language of our Saxon forefathers. It was formed by the fusion of the dialects which the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons carried with them into Britain, and it is the foundation of our own greatly improved speech. In its literary monuments it is usually designated as the Saxon; though the Teutons never gave it that name. They called it English.

From the time of the conversion of the Saxons to Christianity may be dated the rise of their written literature. The earliest productions were poetical, and, with few exceptions, they are directly religious in their nature. They want alike the pathos and the vivacity of fancy which characterize the bardic songs of the vanquished Celts; but they are noted for their calm strength, their direct earnestness, and the moral and religious purity which breathes through the rudest utterance of this rude but brave people. Practical thoughtfulness and solid earnestness were the roots in the character of the Saxons, out of which grew their literature—a rugged plant, "with deep roots and little flower, solid stem, and no luxuriance of foliage."* I subjoin a well-written and brief sketch of the character of the Saxons and their literary remains. It is by Mr. Longfellow:—

The Anglo-Saxons became Christians. For the good of their souls they built monasteries and went on pilgrimages to Rome. The whole country, to use Malmesbury's phrase, was "glorious and refulgent with relics." The priests sang psalms night and day; and so great was the piety of St. Cuthbert, that, according to Bede, he forgot to take off his shoes for months together—sometimes the whole year round—from which Mr. Turner infers that he had no stockings. They also copied the Evangelists, and illustrated them with illuminations; in one of which St. John is represented in a pea-green dress with red stripes. They also drank ale out of buffalo horns and wooden-knobbed goblets. A Mercian king gave to the Monastery of Croyland his great drinking-horn, that the elder monks might drink therefrom at festivals, and "in their benedictions remember sometimes the soul of the donor, Wilaf." They drank his health, with that of Christ, the Virgin Mary, the Apostles, and other saints. Malmesbury says, that excessive drinking was the common vice of all ranks of people. We know that King Hardicanute

* Morley, "First Sketch of English Literature."

died in a revel; and King Edmund in a drunken brawl at Pucklechurch, being, with all his court, much overtaken by liquor at the festival of St. Augustine. Thus did mankind go reeling through the Dark Ages; quarreling, drinking, hunting, hawking, singing psalms, wearing breeches,* grinding in mills, eating hot bread, rocked in cradles, buried in coffins—weak, suffering, sublime. Well might King Alfred exclaim, "Maker of all creatures! help now thy miserable mankind."

A national literature is a subject which should always be approached with reverence. It is difficult to comprehend fully the mind of a nation; even when that nation still lives, and we can visit it, and its present history, and the lives of men we know, help us to a comment on the written text. But here the dead alone speak. Voices, half understood; fragments of song, ending abruptly, as if the poet had sung no further, but died with these last words upon his lips; homilies, preached to congregations that have been asleep for many centuries; lives of saints, who went to their reward long before the world began to scoff at saint-hood; and wonderful legends, once believed by men, and now, in this age of wise children, hardly credible enough for a nurse's tale; nothing entire, nothing wholly understood, and no further comment or illustration than may be drawn from an isolated fact found in an old chronicle, or perchance a rude illumination in an old manuscript! Such is the literature we have now to consider. Such fragments and mutilated remains has the human mind left of itself, coming down through the times of old, step by step, and every step a century. Old men and venerable accompany us through the Past; and, pausing at the threshold of the Present, they put into our hands, at parting, such written records of themselves as they have. We should receive these things with reverence. We should respect old age.

"This leaf, is it not blown about by the wind?
Woe to it for its fate!
Alas! it is old."

What an Anglo-Saxon glee-man was, we know from such commentaries as are mentioned above. King Edgar forbade the monks to be ale poets, (*ealu-scopas*;) and one of his accusations against the clergy of his day was that they entertained glee-men in their monasteries, where they had dicing, dancing, and singing, till midnight. The illumination of an old manuscript shows how a glee-man looked. It is a frontispiece to the Psalms of David. The great psalmist sits upon his throne, with a harp in his hand, and his masters of sacred song around him. Below stands the glee-man; throwing three balls and three knives alternately into the air, and catching them as they fall, like a modern juggler. But all the Anglo-Saxon poets were not glee-men. All the harpers were not *hoppesteres*, or dancers. The *sceop*, the creator, the poet, rose, at times, to higher things. He sang the deeds of heroes, victorious odes, death-songs, epic poems; or, sitting in cloisters, and afar from these things, converted holy writ into Saxon chimes.—LONGFELLOW, *Poets and Poetry of Europe.*

Mr. Taine thus sums up the chief characteristics of Saxon poetry:—

One poem nearly whole, and two or three fragments, are all that remain of this lay-poetry of England. The rest of the pagan current, German and barbarian,

* In an old Anglo-Saxon dialogue, a shoemaker says that he makes "slippers, shoes, and leather breeches," (*swyftleras, sceos, and lether-hose.*)

was arrested or overwhelmed, first by the influx of the Christian religion, then by the conquest of the Norman-French. But the remnant more than suffices to show the strange and powerful poetic genius of the race, and to exhibit beforehand the flower in the bud.

If there has ever been anywhere a deep and serious poetic sentiment, it is here. They do not speak; they sing, or, rather, cry out. Each little verse is an acclamation, which breaks forth like a growl; their strong breasts heave with a groan of anger or enthusiasm, and a vehement phrase or indistinct expression rises suddenly, almost in spite of them, to their lips. There is no art, no natural talent for describing singly and in order the different parts of an object or an event.

In their impassioned minds events are not bald, with the dry propriety of an exact description; each fits in with its pomp of sound, shape, coloring; it is almost a vision which is raised, complete, with its accompanying emotions, joy, fury, excitement. In their speech arrows are "the serpents of Hel, shot from bows of horn," ships are "great sea-steeds," the sea is "a chalice of waves," the helmet is "the castle of the head:" they need an extraordinary speech to express their vehement sensations, so that after a time, in Iceland, when this kind of poetry is carried on, the earlier inspiration fails, art replaces nature, the Skalds are reduced to a distorted and obscure jargon. But whatever be the imagery, here as in Iceland, though unique, it is too feeble. The poets cannot satisfy the inner emotion by a single word. Time after time they return to and repeat their idea. "The sun on high, the great star, God's brilliant candle, the noble creature!" Four subsequent times they employ the same thought, and each time under a new aspect. All its different aspects rise simultaneously before the barbarian's eyes, and each word is like a shock of the semi-hallucination which excited him. Verily, in such a condition the regularity of speech and of ideas is disturbed at every turn. The succession of thought in the visionary is not the same as in a reasoning mind. One color induces another; from sound he passes to sound; his imagination is like a diorama of unexplained pictures. His phrases recur and change; he emits the word that comes to his lips without hesitation; he leaps over wide intervals from idea to idea. The more his mind is transported, the quicker and wider the intervals traversed. With one spring he visits the poles of his horizon, and touches in one moment objects which seemed to have the world between them. His ideas are entangled; without notice, abruptly, the poet will return to the idea he has quitted, and insert in it the thought to which he is giving expression. It is impossible to translate these incongruous ideas, which quite disconcert our modern style. At times they are unintelligible. Articles, particles, every thing capable of illuminating thought, of marking the connection of terms, of producing regularity of ideas, all rational and logical artifices, are neglected. Passion bellows forth like a great shapeless beast; and that is all. It rises and starts in little abrupt lines; it is the acme of barbarism. Homer's happy poetry is copiously developed, in full narrative, with rich and extended imagery. All the details of a complete picture are not too much for him; he loves to look at things; he lingers over them, rejoices in their beauty, dresses them in splendid words; he is like the Greek girls, who thought themselves ugly if they did not bedeck arms and shoulders with all the gold coins from their purses, and all the treasures from their caskets; his long verses flow by with their cadences, and spread out like a purple robe under an Ionian sun. Here the clumsy-fingered poet mingles and clashes his ideas in a bold measure; if measure there be, he barely observes it; all his ornament is three words beginning with one letter.

His chief care is to abridge, to imprison thought in a kind of mutilated cry. The force of the internal impression, which, not knowing how to unfold itself, becomes condensed by accumulation; the harshness of the expression, which, subservient to the energy and shocks of the inner sentiment, seeks only to exhibit it intact and original, spite of all order and beauty—such are the characteristics of their poetry, and these will be the characteristics of the poetry which is to follow.

The Saxons used few similes—the long poem on Beowulf contains only five—but their poetry abounds in metaphor. Mr. Morley, however, says that its metaphors were few and obvious; that there is little turning of a word out of its natural sense in calling the sea the water-street, the whale-road, or the swan-road; the ship a wave-traverser, or night a shadow-covering of creatures. This profusion of poetic names is a marked characteristic of Anglo-Saxon poetry. When Cædmon mentions the ark, he calls it each time by a different name; it is "the floating house, the greatest of floating chambers, the wooden fortress, the cavern, the great sea-chest, the nailed building, the cave, the happiest mansion," and many more. The poem on Beowulf, the selections from Cædmon, the Historic Odes, and other poems which are to follow, will give repeated instances of this kind of poetical periphrasis.

The mechanism of Anglo-Saxon verse is thus described by Longfellow:—

The first thing which strikes the reader of Anglo-Saxon poetry is the structure of the verse; the short exclamatory lines, whose rhythm depends on alliteration in the emphatic syllables, and to which the general omission of the particles gives great energy and vivacity. Though alliteration predominates in all Anglo-Saxon poetry, rhyme is not wholly wanting. It had line-rhymes and final rhymes; which, being added to the alliteration, and brought so near together in the short, emphatic lines, produce a singular effect upon the ear. They ring like blows of hammers on an anvil. For example:—

*F*lah mah *f*liteth,	The strong dart flitteth,
*F*lan man hwiteth,	The spear man whetteth,
*B*urg sorg *b*iteth,	Care the city biteth,
*B*ald ald thwiteth,	Age the bold quelleth,
*Wr*æc-fæc *wr*itheth,	Vengeance prevaileth,
*Wr*ath ath smiteth.	Wrath a city assaileth.

The chief Anglo-Saxon narrative poems that have come down to us are the "Romance of Beowulf," and Cædmon's "Paraphrase of Portions of Holy Writ."

"The only perfect monument," says Mr. Wright, "which the hand of time has left us, is Beowulf."* This heroic legend was

* Wright's *Essay on Anglo-Saxon Poetry.*

brought into Britain by the pagan Teutons. It was afterward put into Saxon verse, probably in the seventh century, and in this form it has been preserved.* Although it has been modified in the transition, it still gives us glimpses of the manners and sentiments of the Saxons before they had turned from the worship of Woden. Its hero, Beowulf, sails with fifteen followers from the land of the Goths, in a "foamy-necked" ship, along the "swan-path" of the ocean, to a land of the Danes, to aid King Hrothgar, "a noble of old goodness," who sits "unblithe" in his great mead-hall, high, and with "battlements curved;" for Grendel, a monster of the fens, had entered the great hall of Heort during the night to see "how the Ring-Danes had ordered it after the service of beer;" and, finding therein a troop of slumbering Thanes, he seized thirty of their number, and then "departed, exulting in his prey, to go home with the carcasses of the slain." For twelve years the grim monster devoured men, and kept the whole land in fear of death. No one could be found bold enough to contend against him. At length Beowulf offered to grapple with the fiend, unarmed. One night, as he lay sleeping in the mead-hall, Grendel came, tore open the door, and seized the warrior, bit his body, and drank the blood from his veins. But Beowulf seized him in turn and gave him a terrible wound; his "sinews sprung asunder, the junctures of the bones burst; success was given to Beowulf." Sick unto death, the grim Grendel sought "his joyless dwelling; he knew that the number of his days had gone by."

Soon after there came by night a female monster, the Grendel's mother, to avenge the death of her son, and carried away the king's best friend. Beowulf offered himself again, and with a great escort went to her den, near the windy sea-noses, where a dreary stream flowed downward, "under the darkness of the hills." Beowulf plunged, all armed, into the wave, was seized, and dragged to the bottom by "the she-wolf of the abyss, the mighty sea-woman." There he saw among the weapons an old "gigantic sword, the work of giants." "He seized the belted hilt, fierce and savage whirled the ring-mail; despairing of life, he struck furiously," and with one blow let the soul of the ogress out of its bone-house. Having freed King Hrothgar from the giants, Beowulf returned to his own land; and after awhile ascended the throne of the Scylfings. When he had reigned

* Mr. Kemble thinks the version we possess is later than the seventh century.—KEMBLE'S *Beowulf*.

fifty years he undertook the perilous adventure of attacking a dragon who came and burned men and houses with "waves of fire." He was wounded mortally in the combat. His dying request to his people was

Command the war chiefs
To make a mound
Bright after the funeral fire,
Upon the nose of the promontory;
Which shall for a memorial
To my people.
Rise high aloft
On Hronesness,
That the sea sailors
May afterward call it
Beowulf's barron,
When the Brentings
Over the darkness of the floods
Shall sail afar.

His people accordingly raised a mighty funeral pile to burn his corpse; it was

Hung round with helmets,
With boards of war, (shields,)
And with bright byrnies, (coats of mail,)
As he had requested.
When the heroes, weeping,
Laid down in the midst
The famous chieftain,
Their dear lord.
Then began on the hill
The warriors to awake
The mightiest of funeral fires;
The wood-smoke rose aloft
Dark from the fire;
Noisily it went,
Mingled with weeping.

After the burning of the body Beowulf's people raised

A mound over the sea;
It was high and broad,
By the sailors over the waves
To be seen afar.
And they built up
During the days
The beacon of the war-renowned.
They surrounded it with a wall
In the most honorable manner
That wise men
Could desire.
They put into the mound
Rings and bright gems,
All such ornaments
As from the hoard before
The fierce-minded men
Had taken;
They suffered the earth to hold
The treasure of warriors,
Gold on the sand,
Where it yet remains
As useless to man
As it was of old.

Then round about the mound rode the heath-shearers, who sang that "he was of kings, of men, the mildest, kindest, to his people sweetest, and the readiest in search of praise." Thus closes one of the most ancient poems in the Anglo-Saxon language; a poem of more than six thousand lines, which, in substance, must have come down from heathen times—it includes the expression of the heathen fatalism, "What is to be goes ever as

it must"—though the form in which it is preserved shows the work of Christian hands.

Mr. Kemble, in the preface to the translation of Beowulf, exhorts all who read the poem to judge it "not by the measure of our times and creeds, but those of the times which it describes; as a rude but very faithful picture of an age wanting, indeed, in scientific knowledge, in mechanical expertness, even in refinement, but brave, generous, and right-principled." *

Cædmon, the author of the "Paraphrase," was a Northumbrian herd, in the service of the convent at Whitby. In his time song-craft was greatly cultivated; and when the harp went round in the beer-club every guest was expected to sing or recite some old Teutonic ballad to music. Bede tells us that Cædmon had never learned any poetry, "and, therefore, at entertainments, when it had been deemed for the sake of mirth that all in turn should sing to the harp, he would rise for shame from the table when the harp approached him, and go out of the hall." One evening, having left the hall, he lay down to sleep in the stable; and as he slept he had a dream, which Bede tells as a miracle:—

One time when he had done this, and left the house of the entertainment, he went to a neat stall, of which he had charge for the night, and there set his limbs to rest, and fell asleep. Then a man stood by him in a dream, and hailed him by name, and said, "Cædmon, sing me something." Then answered he, "I cannot sing any thing, and therefore I went out from the entertainment and came hither, for that I could not sing." But the man said, "However, thou canst sing to me." Cædmon asked then, "What shall I sing?" and the man answered, "Sing me Creation." When he had received this answer, then began he at once to sing in praise of God the Creator verses and words which he had never heard. This was the beginning:—

Now let us praise
The Keeper of heaven's kingdom,
The Creator's might,
And the thought of his mind,
The works of the World-Father—
How of all wonders
He was the beginning.
The holy Creator
First shaped heaven
A roof for earth's children;
Then the Creator,
The keeper of mankind,
The Eternal Lord,
The Almighty Father,
Afterward made the earth
A fold for men.

* "A Translation of the Anglo-Saxon Poem of Beowulf." By John M. Kemble, M.A. 12mo. London, 1837.

Then arose he from sleep, and all that he sleeping had sung he held fast in his memory, and soon added to them many words, as of a song worthy of God. Then came he on the morrow to the town-reeve who was his alderman, and told him of the gift he had gotten, and the town-reeve took him to the abbess, (St. Hilda,) and told her. Then she ordered to gather all the wise men, and bade him in their presence tell his dream and sing the song, that by the doom of them all it might be proved what it was and whence it came. Then it seemed to all, as indeed it was, that a heavenly gift had been given him by the Lord himself. Then they related to him a holy speech, and bade him try to turn that into sweet song. And when he had received it he went home to his house, and, coming again on the morrow, sang them what they had related to him in the sweetest voice. So Cædmon was taken by Abbess Hilda into one of her monasteries, and there sang "the outgoing of Israel's folk from the land of the Egyptians, and the ingoing of the Land of Promise, and of Christ's incarnation, and sufferings, and ascension, and many other spells of Holy Writ. But he never could compose any thing of leasing or of idle song, but those only which belonged to religion, and became a pious tongue to sing.

The plan of Cædmon's "Paraphrase" may be understood from the following notes:—

Book I.—The Creation; revolt of the angels; they are hurled into hell; the fall of man; expulsion from Eden. Cædmon then follows the Scripture story to the Flood. From the Flood to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and thence on to the triumph of Abraham's faith in God, when he "hove on the pile his son Isaac." The story of Moses, a story of the power of God. A paraphrase of parts of the book of Daniel, to show the same Power leading the "three children," with their garments unsinged, through the fiery furnace; their song. This book closes with Belshazzar's feast.

Book II.—Complaints of the fallen angels; the descent of Christ; the Ascension; description of the Last Judgment.

There is a fragment of a poem on Judith in the same manuscript which contains Beowulf.* "This fragment," says Mr. Thorpe, "leads us to form a very high idea of the poetic powers of our forefathers. The entire poem of which it once formed but an inconsiderable part must have been a truly noble production."† The poet relates the history of Judith of the Apocrypha. The part preserved describes with fierce vehemence the death of Holofernes and the battle that followed Judith's return to her countrymen.

Among other fragmentary poems which still survive, the most interesting are the "Death of Bryhtnoth," and a battle-song known as "The Fight of Finnesburg." There is also a fragment

* Translations of some passages of Judith are given in Turner's "History of the Anglo-Saxons," book iii, chap. 3.

† Preface to "Analecta Anglo-Saxonica." A Selection of Prose and Verse from Anglo-Saxon Authors, with a Glossary. By Benjamin Thorpe. 8vo. London, 1834.

of a gloomy poem on "The Grave." Mr. Taine says that in reading this poem "our eyes, glued to the pale face of a dead man, feel beforehand the horror of the damp grave into which the living are about to be cast."

Several remarkable poems are preserved in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Among the best of these are the song on Athelstan's victory at Brunanburgh, and the elegy on King Edgar.

The great body of minor Anglo-Saxon poems that have come down to us are preserved in two collections known as the Exeter Book and the Vercelli Book. Among the contents of these volumes are hymns, allegories, proverbs, riddles, addresses of the Soul to the Body, poems on Death, and the like.*

Among the popular compositions of the Middle Ages was the work of Boethius on the "Consolation of Philosophy," which was translated into several languages of Europe. King Alfred made the Anglo-Saxon version, though he only borrowed the portraits of Boethius.† He almost entirely rewrote the meters, introducing moral reflections of his own.

PROSE WRITERS.

King Alfred is the leading writer of Anglo-Saxon prose, whose works remain. The Welshman Asser has preserved for us an account of this royal scholar's life and works.

Two visits to Rome in his early days gave him a wider range of observation and thought than Anglo-Saxon children commonly enjoyed. When he had reached his twelfth year, he won as a prize a beautiful book of Saxon poetry, which his mother had promised to that one of her sons who should first commit its contents to memory. Already Alfred had been noted in the family circle for the ease with which he remembered the songs sung by the wandering gleemen.

When in 871 he ascended the throne of Wessex his great mind found its destined work. Through many perils and disheartening changes he broke the power of the insolent Danes, taming the pirates into tillers of the Danelagh. And then, his warlike task for the present done, he turned to the elevation of his people's mind.

There being few scholars in the troubled land, he invited learned men from France to preside over the leading schools. Much of his scanty leisure was spent in literary work, chiefly translations into Anglo-Saxon. His chief works were his versions of Bede's "History of the Anglo-Saxon Church," and Boethius on the "Consolation of Philosophy." Translations of "Orosius," of Pope Gregory's "Pastorale," and an unfinished rendering of the Psalms, are also named among his contributions to literature.

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* The Exeter Manuscript has been published by Mr. Thorpe, with the following title: "Codex Exoniensis; A Collection of Anglo-Saxon Poetry, from a Manuscript in the Library of the Dean of Exeter, with an English Translation and Notes." By Benjamin Thorpe, F.S.A. 8vo. London, 1842.

† He is said to have had the assistance of "his chosen friend," Bishop Asser.

There was an author in the latter days of the Anglo-Saxon period known as Alfric the Grammarian, about whom much confusion exists among writers on the Anglo-Saxon literature. Whoever this man was—whether, as is generally thought, that monk of Abingdon who was made Archbishop of Canterbury in 995, or another man, of York, or yet another, of Malmesbury—he contributed largely to the literature of his day. Most of his writings are still extant. His name, the Grammarian, was taken from a "Latin Grammar," which he translated from Donatus and Priscian. His "Latin Glossary" and "Book of Latin Conversation" are works of merit. But his "Eighty Homilies," written in the simplest Anglo-Saxon, for the use of the common people, are undoubtedly his greatest work. Among these is his famous "Paschal Sermon," which embodies the Anglo-Saxon belief on the subject of the Lord's Supper. Alfric of Canterbury died in November, 1006.

The famous "Saxon Chronicle" was the work of centuries. An Archbishop of Canterbury, named Plegmund, drawing largely from Bede, is said to have compiled the work up to 891. It was then carried on in various monasteries until 1154, when the registers ceased to be kept. As a work of history, embracing the events of many hundred years, and written for the most part by men who lived in the midst of the scenes they described, it is perhaps the most valuable inheritance we have received from the native literature of our Saxon forefathers.

A romance founded on the story of Apollonius of Tyre,—King Alfred's Will,—some Laws and Charters,—some Homilies,—and a few works on Grammar, Medicine, and Botany,—are nearly all the specimens of Anglo-Saxon prose that remain.—COLLIER, *History of English Literature.*

LATIN WORKS.

The learned tongue of Europe was then, as it long continued to be, Latin, the writing of which was revived in England by Augustine and his monks. In the stern soldiering days of the Roman period much Latin had been spoken and read, but little had been written, within British bounds. But the Anglo-Saxon monks—nay, the Anglo-Saxon ladies—wrote countless pages of Latin prose and verse. The great subject of these Latin works was theology, as was natural from the circumstance that they were chiefly the productions of the cloister.

Most ancient of the Anglo-Saxon writers in Latin was Aldhelm, Abbot of Malmesbury and Bishop of Sherborn. He was born in Wessex about 656, of the best blood in the land. His chief teacher was an Irish monk named Meildulf, who lived a hermit life under the shade of the great oak-trees in north-eastern Wiltshire. When the followers of Meildulf were formed into a monastery bearing its founder's name, (Meildulfesbyrig or Malmesbury,) Aldhelm was chosen to be their abbot. There he lived a peaceful life, relieving his graver cares with the sweet solace of literature and music. He died at Dilton in May, 709. His chief works are three—a prose treatise in praise of "Virginity," a work in verse on the same subject, and a book of "Riddles." His Latin is impure, filled with Greek words, and stuffed with those alliterations and metaphors which are characteristic of Anglo-Saxon poetry.

Second in time, but first in place, comes the name of Venerable Bede, or Beda. This illustrious man was born about 672 or 673, at Jarrow, in Durham, near the mouth of the Tyne. To the newly founded monastery of Wearmouth, not far distant, the studious boy went at the age of seven, to profit by the teaching of Benedict Biscop. Thenceforward—until his death fifty-six years later—the

cloisters of Wearmouth were his home; and within their quiet seclusion he wrote the great work on which his title to the name Venerable is justly founded. In his fifty-ninth year he brought to a close his famous "History of the Anglo-Saxon Church," written—like nearly all his works—in Latin. Its style is simple and easy, unsullied by the far-fetched figures which are such favorites with Aldhelm. From it we learn nearly all we know of the early history of the Anglo-Saxons and their Church. At the end of this book Bede gives a list of thirty-eight works which he had already written or compiled. These are chiefly theological; but there are, besides, among them, histories, poems, works on physical science, and works on grammar.

Cuthbert, one of Bede's disciples, gives us a sketch of his dying bed. From the beginning of April until the end of May, 735, he continued to sink under an attack of asthma, which had long been sapping his strength. To the very last he worked hard, dictating with his failing breath a translation into Anglo-Saxon of John's Gospel. It was morning on the 27th of May. "Master," said one of the young monks who wrote for him, "there is but one chapter, but thou canst ill bear questioning." "Write quickly on," said Bede. At noon he took a solemn farewell of his friends, distributing among them his treasured spices and other gifts. By sunset there remained but one sentence of the work to do, and scarcely had the concluding words of the Gospel flowed from the pen of the writer, when the venerable monk sighed out, "It is done." The thread was just about to snap. Seated on that part of the floor where he had been wont to kneel in prayer, he pronounced the "Gloria Patri," and died as the last words of the sacred utterance were breathed from his lips.

The year 735, which sealed the eyes of Bede in death, is thought to have given life to the great scholar Alcuin. It is doubtful whether Alcuin was born at York or in Scotland. He won a prominent place in the great school presided over at York by Archbishop Egbert, and when he was called to fill the chair—from which his master, Egbert, had taught so well—he drew even greater crowds of students to this capital of the north. Besides his work as a teacher, he acted as keeper of the fine library collected in the Cathedral of York. While returning from a visit to Rome, he became acquainted at Parma with the Emperor Charlemagne, who invited him to France. Going thither in 782, he speedily became one of the most cherished friends of his imperial patron, who was never happier than when he was chatting and laughing unreservedly with men of thought. After a short visit to England (790–792) in the character of Imperial Envoy, Alcuin seems to have settled permanently in France. There his position was a proud one, for he was recognized as chief among the distinguished group of wits and lettered men who encircled the throne of Charlemagne. The name by which he was known in the brilliant circle was Flaccus Albinus, a title under which he could converse more freely with his friend David (Charlemagne) than if the monk and the emperor always retained their distinctive names and titles. In his old age Alcuin desired earnestly to retire from the glare and bustle of court life to that quiet monastery round which his earliest associations were twined. He had all ready for the journey, when news came of terrible massacres and burnings in the north of England, such as had not before been suffered, although the raven's beak had left many a deep and bloody gash upon the fair English shore. Frightened at such tales, he asked from the emperor a post in which he might calmly pass the evening of his days. The Abbey of Tours, falling vacant just then, became his place of retirement, where he spent his learned leisure in training a new

generation of scholars, and in writing most of those books by which his name has come down to us. At Tours he died in 804.

The "Letters of Alcuin" give a life-like picture of the great events of his day. The wars of Charlemagne against the Saracens and the Saxons are there described; and there, too, we find a graphic account of the inner life of the imperial court. A "Life of Charlemagne" has been ascribed to the pen of Alcuin; but, if there was ever such, it has long been lost. Of his poems, the best is an "Elegy on the Destruction of Lindisfarne by the Danes." He wrote, besides, a long metrical narrative of the bishops and saints of the Church at York, which, on the whole, is not very elegant Latin, and poor enough poetry. Theology, of course, was his principal study; and on this theme he wrote much, pouring from his pen a host of scriptural commentaries and treatises on knotty points of doctrine. As a teacher he ranks much higher than he ranks as an author. His chief glory—and the thing of which his countrymen were especially proud—was the fact that he, a Briton, had been chosen to give instruction to the great Emperor of the West.

John Scotus or Erigena, although not a Saxon, but, as his name shows, an Irishman, claims our special notice here. Little is known of this great man. He probably settled in France about 845, and lived there, under the patronage of Charles the Bald, for thirty years. He should be well remembered for two things: he was a learned layman, and a well-read Greek scholar, both characters being very rare in those benighted days. His chief works are a treatise on "Predestination," in which he argues that God has foreordained only rewards for the good, and that man has brought evil on himself by the exercise of his own perverted will; a treatise on the "Eucharist," denying the doctrine of transubstantiation: and—more remarkable than either—a book "On the Division of Nature," which embraces a wide range of scientific knowledge, and is copiously enriched with extracts from Greek and Latin writers.

The bold, fearless nature of the man, and the familiar tone of the Frankish court life, are well illustrated by an anecdote told of Erigena. One day the king and he sat on opposite sides of the table, with the courtiers ranged around. The scholar—through forgetfulness or ignorance—transgressed some of the rules of etiquette, so as to offend the fastidious taste of those who sat by, upon which the king asked him what was the difference between a Scot* and a sot. "Just the breadth of the table," said Erigena; and it is more than likely that the royal witling ventured on no more puns, for that day at least, at the scholar's expense. Erigena is said to have died in France some time previous to the year 877.

The latter days of the Anglo-Saxon literature were feeble compared with the vigor of its youth. Even in the day of Alfred, when it may be said to have reached its prime, decay was at work, and the ravages of the Danes completed the blight of its promise. Those were days when many kings made their mark at the foot of charters, for want of skill to write their names. Alfred could find no tutors able to teach the higher branches of education; and he was forced to state publicly, in his preface to Gregory's "Pastorale," that he knew no men south of the Thames, and few south of the Humber, who could follow the sense of the public prayers, or construe a Latin sentence into English. Yet that an Anglo-Saxon literature—however scanty—*did* flourish, is no slight wonder, for during those ages clouds of thickest darkness hung over all Europe with a seemingly impenetrable gloom.—COLLIER, *History of English Literature.*

* A *Scot* then meant a native of Ireland.

ANGLO-SAXON POETRY.

POEM OF BEOWULF.

PRELUDE.

Lo! we of the Gár-Banes
In days of yore,
Of the illustrious kings
The majesty have learned,
How the nobles
Carried out valor.
Oft did Shyld the son of Sceáf
From the hosts of his foes,
From many tribes,
The mead-stones tear away;
The earl became an object of terror
After he erst had been
An outcast found.
He therefore abode in comfort,
Waxed under the welkin,
Flourished in dignities,
Until him each one
Of the surrounding peoples
Over the whale's path
Must obey,
Must pay tribute:
That was a brave king!
Unto whom was an heir
Afterward born,
Young in his dwelling-places,
Whom God had sent
As a comfort to the people;
From fell-need knew he
That they had formerly suffered
While prince-less
For a long time:
Upon them therefore the Lord of life,
The Ruler of glory,
Worldly honor bestowed.

BEOWULF THE SHYLD.

Then dwelt in the cities
Beowulf the Shyld,
A king dear to the people.
Long did he live
His country's father.
To him was born
Healfden the high;
He, while he lived,
Reigned and grew old,
The delight of the Shylds.
To him four children
Grew up in the world,
Leaders of hosts,
Weorgar and Rothgar,
And Halga the good.
And I have heard
That Helen his queen
Was born of the Shefings.
Then was to Rothgar
Speedily given
The command of the army
Him his friends
Heard most willingly.
When to the youth
Was grown up a family,
It came to his mind
He would build them a hal.
Much was there to earn,
And men wrought at it,
And brought it to bear.
And there within
He dealt out ale
To young and old,
As God sent them;
Without stood the people,
And sported afar.
And, as I have inquired,
The work was praised
In many a place
Amid the earth.
To found a folkstead
He first contrived
Among his liegemen;
And when this was finished,
The first of halls,
Earth gave him a name,
So that his words
Had power afar.
He received guests,
And gave bracelets

To the friends of the feast;
And the ceilings echoed
To the sound of the horn,
And healths were given
In strong drink.

THE SAILING OF BEOWULF.

Famous was Beowulf;
Wide sprang the blood
Which the heir of the Shylds
Shed on the lands.
So shall the bracelets
Purchase endeavor,
Freely presented,
As by thy fathers;
And all the young men,
As is their custom,
Cling round their leader
Soon as the war comes.
Lastly thy people
The deeds shall bepraise
Which their men have performed.
When the Shyld had awaited
The time he should stay,
Came many to fare
On the billows so free.
His ship they bore out
To the brim of the ocean,
And his comrades sat down
At their oars as he bade:
A word could control
His good fellows, the Shylds.
There, at the Hythe,
Stood his old father,
Long to look after him.
The band of his comrades,
Eager for outfit,
Forward the Atheling.
Then all the people
Cheered their loved lord,
The giver of bracelets.
On the deck of the ship
He stood by the mast.
There was treasure
Won from afar
Laden on board.
Ne'er did I hear
Of a vessel appointed
Better for battle,
With weapons of war
And waistcoats of wool,
And axes and swords.

GRENDEL.

So the vassals
Lived in joy
Happily;
Until that one began
To practice crime,
A fiend in hell:
The grim stranger
Was called Grendel,
A mighty haunter of the marches,
One that held the moors;
Fen and fastness,
The dwelling of the monster race,
This wretched man
Guarded for awhile,
After the Creator had
Appointed him his punishment.

BEOWULF'S EXPEDITION TO HEORT.

So Healfden's son
Continually seethed
The sorrow of the time;
Nor might the prudent hero
Turn away the ruin;
The struggle was too strong,
Loathly and tedious,
That had come upon the people,
Inevitable mischief
Grim with malice,
The greatest of night-evils.
That from his home heard
Hygelac's thane,
Good among the Geats,*
He heard of Grendel's deeds.
He of the race of men
Was strongest of might,
In the day of his life;
Noble and full-grown.
He commanded to make ready
For him a good ship:

* The Goths.

Quoth he, he would seek the war-king
Over the swan's path;
The renowned prince,
Since he had need of men.
This journey prudent men
Somewhat blamed,
Although he were dear to them;
They sharpened . . .; *
They watched the omen:
The good chieftain
Had chosen warriors
Of the Geátish people,
The bravest of those
Whom he could find.
With fifteen men
He sought the sea-wood;
A warrior,
A man crafty in lakes,
Pointed out the boundaries of the land.
The time passed on;
The ship was on the waves,
The boat beneath a mountain;
The ready warriors
Stepped upon the prow.
They whirled the streams,
The sea against the sand:
The men bore
Into the bosom of the bark
A bright ornament,
Their ready, war-like appointments.
The men shored forth
The bounden wood,
The men upon the journey
They desired.
Then likest to a bird,
The foam-necked ship,
Impelled by the wind,
Started over the
Deep waves of the sea,
Till that about one hour
Of the second day,
The wreathed-prowed ship
Had sailed over,
So that the travelers
Saw the land,
The sea-cliffs,
The steep mountains shine,
The wide sea-promontories.†
There was the sea
Sailed over,
At the end of their pains.
Thence quickly up
The people of the Westerns
Stepped upon the plain;
They tried the sea-wood,
They let down their shirts of mail,
Their war-weeds;
They thanked God,
Because the waveways
Had been easy to them.
Them from the wall,
The warder of the Scyldings,
Whose duty it was
To keep the sea-cliffs,
Beheld bear over the balks
Their bright shields,
Their ready implements of war
Curiosity overcame him
In the thoughts of his mind,
What the men might be.
He then set out
To ride upon his horse
To the sea-shore;
Hrothgar's thane
Brandished a mighty spear
In his strong hands;
He spake with prepared words:
"What are ye,
Of armed men,
Guarded with mailed coats,
That thus have come,
To lead a foaming keel,
Over the lake paths?
I, on this account placed here
At the extremity of the territory,
Have kept an ocean watch,
That on the Land of the Danes
No foe might do injury
With a sea-force.
Hither no shield-bearers
Have begun to come more openly,
Who knew not already
The password of our warriors,
The due observances of kinsmen.
I never saw throughout the earth
A larger champion

* They excited their souls. † Or, as the poet calls them, the sea-noses (saenæssas.)

Than one of you is,
A warrior in his trappings.
That man is not one
Seldom dignified
In feats of arms,
Unless his face,
His comely countenance,
Belie him.
Now must I know
Your origin,
Before ye proceed farther
Into the Land of the Danes,
False spies, as ye are.
Now, ye dwellers afar off!
Ye sailors over the sea!
Ye hear my simple thought:
Speed were best to reveal
Whence is your coming."

AN OLD MAN'S SORROW.

Careful, sorrowing,
He seeth in his son's bower
The wine-hall deserted,
The resort of the wind noiseless;
The Knight sleepeth,
The Warrior, in darkness;
There is not there
Noise of the harp,
Joy in the dwellings,
As there was before;
Then departeth he into songs,
Singeth a lay of sorrow,
One after one;
All seemed to him too wide,
The plains and the dwelling-place.

GOOD NIGHT.

The night helm grew dusky,
Dark over the vassals;
The court all rose,
The mingled haired
Old Scylding
Would visit his bed;
The Geát wished the
Renowned Warrior to rest
Immeasurably well.
Soon him the foreigner,
Weary of his journey,
The hall-thane guided forth,
Who, after a fitting manner,
Provided all that
The thane needed,
Whatsoever that day
The sailers over the deep
Should have.
The magnanimous warrior rested;
The house rose aloft,
Curved and variegated with gold.
The stranger slept therein,
Until the pale raven,
Blithe of heart,
Announced the joy of heaven,
The bright sun, to be come.

CÆDMON.

THE FIRST DAY.

There had not here as yet,
Save cavern-shade,
Aught been;
But this wide abyss
Stood deep and dim,
Strange to its Lord,
Idle and useless;
On which looked with his eyes
The King firm of mind,
And beheld those places
Void of joys;
Saw the dark cloud
Lower in eternal night,
Swart under heaven,
Dark and waste,
Until this worldly creation
Through the world existed
Of the Glory-King.
Here first shaped
The Lord eternal,
Chief of all creatures,
Heaven and earth;
The firmament upreared,
And this spacious land
Established,

By his strong powers,
The Lord Almighty.
The earth as yet was
Not green with grass;
Ocean covered,
Swart in eternal night,
Far and wide
The dusky rays.
Then was the glory-bright
Spirit of heaven's Guardian
Borne over the deep,
With utmost speed:
The Creator of angels bade,
The Lord of life,
Light to come forth
Over the spacious deep,
Quickly was fulfilled
The high King's behest;
For him was holy light
Over the waste,
As the Maker bade.
Then sundered
The Lord of triumphs
Over the ocean-flood
Light from darkness,
Shade from brightness;
Then gave names to both
The Lord of life.
Light was first
Through the Lord's word
Named day;
Beauteous, bright creation!
Well pleased
The Lord at the beginning
The procreative time.
The first day saw
The dark shade
Swart prevailing
Over the wide abyss.

THE FALL OF THE REBEL ANGELS.

The All-powerful had
Angel-tribes,
Through might of hand,
The holy Lord,
Ten established,
In whom he trusted well
That they his service
Would follow,
Work his will;
Therefore he gave them wit,
And shaped them with his hands
The holy Lord.
He had placed them so happily,
One he had made so powerful,
So mighty in his mind's thought,
He let him sway over so much,
Highest after himself in heaven's kingdom.
He had made him so fair,
So beauteous was his form in heaven,
That came to him from the Lord of hosts,
He was like to the light stars.
It was his to work the praise of the Lord,
It was his to hold dear his joys in heaven,
And to thank his Lord
For the reward that he had bestowed on him in that light;
Then had he let him long possess it;
But he turned it for himself to a worse thing,
Began to raise war upon him,
Against the highest Ruler of heaven,
Who sitteth in the holy seat.
Dear was he to our Lord,
But it might not be hidden from him
That his angel began
To be presumptuous,
Raised himself against his Master,
Sought speech of hate,
Word of pride towards him,
Would not serve God,
Said that his body was
Light and beauteous,
Fair and bright of hue:
He might not find in his mind
That he would God
In subjection,
His Lord, serve:
Seemed to himself
That he a power and force
Had greater
Than the holy God
Could have
Of adherents.

Many words spake
The angel of presumption:
Thought, through his own power,
How he for himself a stronger
Seat might make,
Higher in heaven:
Said that him his mind impelled,
That he west and north
Would begin to work,
Would prepare structures:
Said it to him seemed doubtful
That he to God would
Be a vassal.
"Why shall I toil?" said he;
"To me it is no whit needful
To have a superior;
I can with my hands as many
Wonders work;
I have great power
To form
A diviner throne,
A higher in heaven.
Why shall I for his favor serve,
Bend to him in such vassalage?
I may be a god as he.
Stand by me, strong associates,
Who will not fail me in the strife.
Heroes stern of mood,
They have chosen me for chief,
Renowned warriors!
With such may one devise counsel,
With such capture his adherents;
They are my zealous friends,
Faithful in their thoughts;
I may be their chieftain,
Sway in this realm:
Thus to me it seemeth not right
That I in aught
Need cringe
To God for any good;
I will no longer be his vassal."
When the All powerful it
All had heard,
That his angel devised
Great presumption
To raise up against his Master,
And spake proud words
Foolishly against his Lord,
Then must he expiate the deed,
Share the work of war,
And for his punishment must have
Of all deadly ills the greatest.
So doth every man
Who against his Lord
Deviseth to war,
With crime against the great Ruler.
Then was the Mighty angry,
The highest Ruler of heaven,
Hurled him from the lofty seat,
Hate had he gained at his Lord,
His favor he had lost,
Incensed with him was the Good in his mind,
Therefore must he seek the gulf
Of hard hell-torment,
For that he had warred with heaven's Ruler.
He rejected him then from his favor,
And cast him into hell,
Into the deep parts,
Where he became a devil:
The fiend with all his comrades
Fell then from heaven above;
Through as long as three nights and days,
The angels form heaven into hell;
And them all the Lord transformed to devils,
Because they his deeds and word
Would not revere;
Therefore them in a worse light,
Under the earth beneath,
Almighty God
Had placed triumphless
In the swart hell;
There they have at even,
Immeasurably long,
Each of all the fiends,
A renewal of fire;
Then cometh ere dawn
The eastern wind,
Frost bitter-cold,
Ever fire or dart;
Some hard torment
They must have;
It was wrought for them in punishment,
Their world (life) was changed:
For their sinful course
He filled hell
With the apostates.

The angels continued to hold
The heights of heaven's kingdom.
Those who ere God's pleasure executed;
The others lay fiends in the fire,
Who ere had had so much
Strife with their Ruler;
Torment they suffer,
Burning heat intense,
In midst of hell,
Fire and broad flames;
So also the bitter reeks
Smoke and darkness;
For that they the service
Of God neglected,
Them their folly deceived,
The angels' pride,
They would not the All-powerful's
Word revere,
They had great torment;
Then were they fallen
To the fiery abyss,
Into the hot hell,
Through frenzy
And through pride;
They sought another land,
That was void of light,
And was full of flame,
A great receptacle of fire.

SATAN'S SPEECH.

Satan harangued,
Sorrowing spake,
He who hell henceforth
Should rule,
Govern the abyss.
He was erst God's angel,
Fair in heaven,
Until him his mind urged,
And his pride
Most of all,
That he would not
The Lord of hosts'
Word revere;
Boiled within him
His thought about his heart,
Hot was without him
His dire punishment.

Then spake he the words:
This narrow place is most unlike
That other that we ere knew,
High in heaven's kingdom,
Which my Master bestowed on me,
Though we it, for the All-powerful,
May not possess,
Must cede our realm;
Yet hath he not done rightly,
That he hath struck us down
To the fiery abyss
Of the hot hell,
Bereft us of heaven's kingdom,
Hath it decreed
With mankind
To people.
That of sorrows is to me the greatest,
That Adam shall,
Who of earth was wrought,
My strong
Seat possess,
Be to him in delight,
And we endure this torment,
Misery in this hell.
O, had I power of my hands,
And might one season
Be without,
Be one winter's space,
Then with this host I—
But around me lie
Iron bonds,
Presseth this cord of chain:
I am powerless!
Me have so hard
The clasps of hell
So firmly grasped!
Here is a vast fire
Above and underneath,
Never did I see
A loathlier landskip;
The flame abateth not,
Hot over hell.
Me hath the clasping of these rings,
This hard-polished band,
Impeded in my course,
Debarred me from my way;
My feet are bound,
My hands manacled,
Of these hell-doors are
The ways obstructed,

So that with aught I cannot
From these limb-bonds escape:
About me lie
Of hard iron
Forged with heat
Huge gratings,
With which me God
Hath fastened by the neck.
Thus perceive I that he knoweth my mind,
And that knew also
The Lord of hosts,
That should us through Adam
Evil befall,
About the realm of heaven,
Where I had power of my hands;
But we now suffer chastisement in hell,
Which is darkness and heat,
Grim, bottomless;
God hath us himself
Swept into these swart mists;
Thus he cannot us accuse of any sin,
That we against him in the land framed evil:
Yet hath he deprived us of the light,
Cast us into the greatest of all torments:
We may not for this execute vengeance,
Reward him with aught of hostility,
Because he hath bereft us of the light.
He hath now devised a world
Where he hath wrought man
After his own likeness,
With whom he will repeople
The kingdom of heaven, with pure souls;
Therefore must we strive zealously,
That we on Adam, if we ever may,
And likewise on his offspring, our wrongs repair,
Corrupt him there in his will,
If we may it in any way devise.
Now I have no confidence further in this bright state,
That which he seems long destined to enjoy,
That bliss with his angels' power.
We cannot that ever obtain,
That we the mighty God's mind weaken;
Let us avert it now from the children of men,
That heavenly kingdom now we may not have it;
Let us so do that they forfeit his favor,
That they pervert that which he hath with his word commanded;
Then with them will he be wroth in mind,
Will cast them from his favor;
Then shall they seek this hell,
And these grim depths;
Then may we them have to ourselves as vassals,
The children of men, in this vast durance.
Begin we now about the warfare to consult:—
If to any follower I
Princely treasures
Gave of old,
While we in that good realm
Happy sat
And in our seats had sway,
Then me he never at time more precious
Could with recompense
My gift repay,
If in return for it he would
(Any of my followers)
Be my supporter;
So that up from hence he
Forth might
Pass through these barriers,
And had power with him,
That he with wings
Might fly,
Revolve in cloud,
To where stand wrought
Adam and Eve,
On earth's kingdom,
With weal encircled,
And we are hither cast
Into this deep den.—
Now with the Lord are they
Far higher in esteem,
And may for themselves that weal possess
That we in heaven's kingdom
Should have,

Our realm by right:
This counsel is decreed
For mankind.
That to me is in my mind so painful,
Rueth in my thought,
That they heaven's kingdom
Forever shall possess.
If any of you may
With aught so turn it,
That they God's word
Through guile forsake,
Soon shall they be the more hateful to him:
If they break his commandment,
Then will he be incensed against them;
Afterwards will the weal be turneed from them,
And for them punishment will be prepared,
Some hard lot of evil."

THE TEMPTATION OF EVE.

Began then himself equip
The apostate from God,
Prompt in arms;
He had a crafty soul.
On his head the chief his helmet set,
And it full strongly bound,
Braced it with clasps:
He many speeches knew
Of guileful words.
Wheeled up from thence,
Departed through the doors of hell:
(He had a strong mind:)
Lion-like in air,
In hostile mood,
Dashed the fire aside
With a fiend's power:
Would secretly
The subjects of the Lord,
With wicked deeds,
Men deceive,
Mislead and pervert,
That they might become hateful to God.
He journeyed then,
Through his fiend's might,
Until he Adam,
On earth's kingdom,
The creature of God's hand,
Found ready,
Wisely wrought,
And his wife also,
Fairest woman;
Just as they knew many things
Of good to frame,
Which to them, his disciples,
The Creator of mankind
Had himself pointed out;
And by them two
Trees stood,
That were without
Laden with fruit,
With produce covered
As them the powerful God,
High King of heaven,
With his hands had set,
That there the child of man
Might choose
Of good and evil,
Every man,
Of weal and woe.
The fruit was not alike: . . .
The one so pleasant was,
Fair and beautiful,
Soft and delicate;
That was life's tree:
He might forever
After live,
Be in the world,
Who of this fruit tasted,
So that him after that
Age might not impair,
Nor grievous sickness;
But he might ever be
Forthwith in joys,
And his life hold;
The favor of heaven's King
Here in the world have,
To him should be decreed
Honors in the high heaven
When he goeth hence:
Then was the other
Utterly black,
Dim and dark;
That was death's tree,
Which much of bitter bare:
Both must know
Every mortal,

Evil and good:
Waned in this world,
He in pain must ever,
With sweat and with sorrows,
After live,
Whoe'er should taste
Of what on this tree grew;
Age should from him take
Of bold deeds
The joys and of dominion,
And death be him allotted:
A little while he should
His life enjoy,
Then seek of lands
With fire the swartest.
To fiends should minister,
Where of all perils is the greatest
To people for a long season.
That the foe well knew,
The devil's dark messenger,
Who warred with God.
Cast him then into a worm's body,
And then twined about
The tree of death;
Through devil's craft:
There took of the fruit,
And again turned him thence
To where he knew the handiwork
Of heaven's King to be.
Began then ask him,
With his first word,
The enemy with lies:
"Cravest thou aught,
Adam, up with God?
I on his errand hither have
Journeyed from far,
Nor was it now long since
That with himself I sat,
When he bade me to travel on this journey;
Bade that of this fruit thou eat,
Said that thy power and strength
And thine understanding
Would become greater,
And thy body
Brighter far,
Thy form more beauteous:
Said that to thee of any treasure need
Would not be in the world;
Now thou hast willingly
Wrought the favor
Of heaven's King,
Gratefully served
Thy Master,
Hast made thee dear with thy Lord.
I heard him thy deeds and words
Praise in his brightness,
And speak about thy life:
So must thou execute
What hither, into this land,
His angels bring.
In the world are broad
Green places,
And God ruleth
In the highest
Realm of heaven.
The All-powerful above
Will not the trouble
Have himself,
That on this journey he should come,
The Lord of men;
But he his vassal sendeth
To thy speech:
Now biddeth he thee, by messages,
Science to learn:—
Perform thou zealously
His message.
Take thee this fruit in hand;
Bite it, and taste;
In thy breast thou shalt be expanded,
Thy form the fairer;
To thee hath sent the powerful God,
Thy Lord, this help
From heaven's kingdom."
Adam spake,
Where on earth he stood,
A self-created man:
"When I the Lord of triumph,
The mighty God,
Heard speak
With strong voice;
And he me here standing bade
Hold his commandments,
And me gave this bride,
This wife of beauteous mien;
And me bade beware
That in the tree of death
I were not deceived,
Too much seduced:
He said that the swart hell

Should inhabit
He who in his heart aught
Should admit of sin.
I know not (for thou mayest come with lies,
Through dark design)
That thou art the Lord's
Messenger from heaven.
Nay, I cannot of thy orders,
Of thy words, nor courses,
Aught understand,
Of thy journey, nor of thy sayings.
I know what he himself commanded me,
Our Preserver,
When him last I saw:
He bade me his words revere
And well observe,
Execute his instructions.
Thou art not like
To any of his angels
That I before have seen,
Nor showest thou me
Any token
Which he to me in pledge
Hath sent,
My Lord, through favor;
Therefore thee I cannot obey:
But thou mayest take thee hence.
I have firm trust
On the almighty God above,
Who wrought me with his arms,
Here with his hands:
He can me, from his high realm,
Gift with each good,
Though he send not his vassal."
He turned him, wroth of mood,
To where he saw the woman,
On earth's realm,
Eve standing,
Beautifully formed;
Said that the greatest ills
To all their offspring
From thenceforth
In the world would be.
"I know the supreme God with you
Will be incensed,
As I to him this message
Myself relate,
When I from this journey come
Over a long way:
That ye will not well execute
Whatsoever errand he
From the east hither
At this time sendeth.
Now must he come himself
For your answer,
His errand may not
His messenger command;
Therefore know I that he with you will be angry,
The Mighty, in his mind.
If thou nathless wilt,
A willing woman,
My words obey,
Then for this mayest thou amply
Counsel devise:
Consider in thy breast,
That from you both thou mayest
Ward off punishment,
As I shall show thee
Eat of this fruit;
Then will thine eyes become so clear,
That thou mayest so widely
Over all the world
See afterwards,
And the throne of himself
Thy Lord, and have
His grace henceforward.
Thou mightest Adam
Afterwards rule,
If thou his affection have,
And he trust in thy words;
If thou soothly say to him
What monitions thou thyself
Hast in thy breast,
Wherefore thou God's mandate
By persuasion hast performed—
He the hateful strife,
The evil answer,
Will abandon
In his breast's recess;
So we both to him
One purpose speak:
Urge thou him zealously,
That he may follow thy instruction;
Lest ye hateful to God
Your Lord
Should become.
If thou perfect his attempt,

Best of women,
I will conceal from your Lord
That to me so much calumny
Adam spake,
Evil words,
Accuseth me of untruths,
Sayeth that I am anxious for mischiefs,
A servant to the malignant,
Not God's angel:
But I so readily know all
The angels' origins,
The roofs of the high heavens,
So long was the while
That I diligently
Served God,
Through faithful mind,
My Master,
The Lord himself—
I am not like a devil."
He led her thus with lies,
And with wiles instigated
The woman to that evil,
Until began within her
The serpent's counsel boil:
(To her a weaker mind had
The Creator assigned)
So that she her mood
Began relax, after those allurements;
Therefore she of the enemy received,
Against the Lord's word,
Of death's tree
The noxious fruit.
Then to her spouse she spake:
"Adam, my lord,
This fruit is so sweet,
Mild in the breast,
And this bright messenger
God's angel good;
I by his habit see
That he is the envoy
Of our Lord,
Heaven's King.
His favor it is for us
Better to gain
Than his aversion.
If thou to him this day
Spake aught of harm,
Yet will he it forgive,
If we to him obedience
Will show.
What shall profit thee such hateful strife
With thy Lord's messenger?
To us is his favor needful;
He may bear our errands
To the all-powerful
Heavenly King.
I can see from hence
Where he himself sitteth,
That is south-east,
With bliss encircled,
Him who formed this world.
I see his angels
Encompass him
With feathery wings,
Of all folks greatest,
Of bands most joyous.
Who could to me
Such perception give,
If now it
God did not send,
Heaven's Ruler?
I can hear from afar,
And so widely see,
Through the whole world,
Over the broad creation;
I can the joy of the firmament
Hear in heaven;
It became light to me in mind,
From without and within,
After the fruit I tasted:
I now have of it
Here in my hand,
My good lord,
I will fain give it thee;
I believe that it
Came from God,
Brought by his command,
From what this messenger told me
With cautious words.
It is not like to aught
Else on earth;
But, so this messenger saith,
That it directly
Came from God."
She spake to him oft,
And all day urged him
To that dark deed,
That they their Lord's
Will break.

The fell envoy stood by,
Excited his desires,
And with wiles urged him,
Dangerously followed him:
The foe was full near
Who on that dire journey
Had fared
Over a long way;
Nations he studied,
Into that great perdition
Men to cast,
To corrupt and to mislead,
That they God's loan,
The Almighty's gift,
Might forfeit;
The power of heaven's kingdom;
For the hell-miscreant
Well knew
That they God's ire
Must have
And hell-torment,
The torturing punishment
Needs receive
Since they God's command
Had broken.
What time he (the fiend) seduced
With lying words
To that evil counsel
The beauteous woman,
Of females fairest,
That she after his will spake,
Was as a help to him
To seduce God's handiwork.
Then she to Adam spake,
Fairest of women,
Full oft,
Till in the man began
His mind to turn;
So that he trusted to the promise
Which to him the woman
Said in words:
Yet did she it through faithful mind,
Knew not that hence so many ills,
Sinful woes,
Must follow
To mankind,
Because she took in mind
That she the hostile envoy's
Suggestions would obey;
But weened that she the favor
Of heaven's King
Wrought with the words
Which she to the man
Revealed, as it were a token,
And vowed them true,
Till that to Adam
Within his breast
His mind was changed,
And his heart began
Turn to her will.
He from the woman took
Hell and death,
Though it was not so called.
But it the name of fruit
Must have:
Yet was its death's dream,
And the devil's artifice,
Hell and death,
And men's perdition,
The destruction of human kind,
That they made for food
Unholy fruit!
Thus it came within him,
Touched at his heart.
Laughed then and played
The bitter-purposed messenger.

THE FLIGHT OF THE ISRAELITES.

Loud was the shout of the host,
The heavenly beacon rose
Each evening.
Another stupendous wonder!—
After the sun's
Setting course, they beheld
Over the people
A flame to shine,
A burning pillar;
Pale stood
Over the archers
The clear beams;
The bucklers shone.
The shades prevailed;
Yet the falling nightly shadows
Might not near
Shroud the gloom.
The heavenly candle burnt,
The new night-ward
Must by compulsion

Rest over the hosts,
Lest them horror of the waste,
The hoar heath
With its raging storms,
Should overwhelm,
Their souls fail.
Had their harbinger
Fiery locks,
Pale beams,
A cry of dread resounded
In the martial host,
At the hot flame,
That it in the waste
Would burn up the host,
Unless they zealously
Moses obeyed.
Shone the bright host,
The shields gleamed;
The bucklered warriors saw
In a straight course
The sign over the bands,
Till that the sea-barrier,
At the land's end,
The people's force withstood,
Suddenly, on their onward way.
A camp arose;
They cast them weary down;
Approached with sustenance
The bold sewers;
They their strength repaired,
Spread themselves about,
After the trumpet sang,
The sailors in the tents.
Then was the fourth station,
The shielded warriors' rest,
By the Red Sea. . . .
Then of his men the mind
Became despondent,
After that they saw,
From the south ways,
The host of Pharaoh
Coming forth,
Moving over the holt,
The band glittering.
They prepared their arms,
The war advanced,

Bucklers glittered,
Trumpets sang,
Standards rattled,
They trod the nation's frontier.
Around them screamed
The fowls of war,
Greedy of battle,
Dewy-feathered;
Over the bodies of the host
(The dark chooser of the slain)
The wolves sung
Their horrid evensong,
In hopes of food,
The reckless beasts,
Threatening death to the valiant:
On the foes' track flew
The army-fowl.
The march-wards cried
At midnight;
Flew the spirit of death;
The people were hemmed in.
At length of that host
The proud thanes
Met 'mid the paths,
In bendings of the boundaries;
To them there the banner-king
Marched with the standard;
The prince of men
Rode the marches with his band;
The warlike guardian of the people
Clasped his grim helm,
The king, his visor.
The banners glittered
In hopes of battle;
Slaughter shook the proud.
He bade his warlike band
Bear them boldly,
The firm body.
The enemy saw
With hostile eyes
The coming of the natives:
About him moved
Fearless warriors;
The hoar army wolves
The battle hailed,
Thirsty for the brunt of war.

POEM OF JUDITH.

THE REVEL OF HOLOFERNES.

They then to the feast
Went to sit,
Eager to drink wine;
All his fierce chiefs,
Bold, mail-clad warriors!
There were often carried
The deep bowls
Behind the benches;
So likewise vessels
And orcas full
To those sitting at supper.
They received him, soon about to die,
The illustrious shield-warriors:
Though of this the powerful one
Thought not; the fearful
Lord of earls.
Then was Holofernes
Exhilarated with wine;
In the halls of his guests
He laughed and shouted,
He roared and dinned;
Then might the children of men
Afar off hear
How the stern one
Stormed and clamored.
Animated and elated with wine.
He admonished amply
That they should bear it well
To those sitting on the bench.
So was the wicked one,
Over all the day,
The lord and his men,
Drunk with wine,
The stern dispenser of wealth;
Till that they swimming lay
Over drunk,
All his nobility,
As they were death-slain;
Their property poured about.
So commanded the Baldor of men
To fill to them sitting at the feast,
Till that to the children of men
The dark night approached.
Then commanded he,
The man so overpowered,
The blessed virgin
With speed to fetch
To his bed-rest,
With bracelets laden,
With rings adorned.
Then quickly hurried
The subjected servants,
As their elder bade them;
The mailed warriors
Of the illustrious lord
Stepped to the great place.
There they found Judith,
Prudent in mind;
And then, firmly,
The bannered soldiers
Began to lead
The illustrious virgin
To the high tent.
There the powerful one
His rest on the feast-night
Within was enjoying,
The odious Holofernes.
There was the fair;
The golden fly-net
About the chief's bed hung,
That the mischief-full
Might look through,
The Baldor of the soldiers,
On every one
That there within came
Of the children of men;
And on him no one
Of mankind;
Unless the proud one,
Any man of his illustrious soldiers
Commanded to come
Near him to council.

THE DEATH OF HOLOFERNES.

She took the heathen man
Fast by his hair;
She drew him by the limbs
Toward her disgracefully;
And the mischief-full,
Odious man
At her pleasure laid,

So as the wretch
She might the easiest well command.
She with the twisted locks
Struck the hateful enemy,
Meditating hate,
With the red sword,
Till she had half cut off his neck;
So that he lay in a swoon,
Drunk and mortally wounded.
He was not then dead,
Not entirely lifeless;
She struck then earnest,
The woman illustrious in strength,
Another time,
The heathen hound;
Till that his head
Rolled forth upon the floor.
The foul one lay without a coffer;
Backward his spirit turned
Under the Abyss,
And there was plunged below,
With sulphur fastened;
Forever afterward wounded by worms.
Bound in torments,
Hard imprisoned,
In hell he burns.
After his course,
He need not hope,
With darkness overwhelmed,
That he may escape
From the mansion of worms;
But there he shall remain
Ever and ever,
Without end, henceforth,
In that cavern home,
Void of the joys of hope.

JUDITH'S SPEECH TO THE PEOPLE.

Then spake the noble one
To all the people,
"Here we may manifestly
Stare on the head
Of the man illustrious for victory,
Of the leader of his people,
Of the odious heathen commander;
Of the not living Holofernes,
He that of all men to us
Most murders has done,
Sure sorrows;
And more yet
Would have augmented them,
But that to him God grants not
A longer life,
That he with injuries
Should afflict us.
I from him life took away,
Through God's assistance.
Now I to every man
Of these citizens
Will pray,
Of these shield-warriors,
That ye immediately
Haste you to fight.
When God, the source of all,
The honor-fast King,
From the east sends
A ray of light,
Bear forth your banners;
With shields for your breasts,
And mail for your hams,
Shining helmets,
Go among the robbers;
Let their leaders fall,
The devoted chiefs,
By the ruddy sword!
They are your enemies,
Destined to death,
And ye shall have their doom,
Victory from your great leader,
The mighty Lord!
As he hath signified to you
By my hand.

THE BATTLE.

They dinned shields;
Men roared loudly.
At this rejoiced the lank
Wolf in the wood,
And the wan raven,
The fowl greedy of slaughter,
Both from the west,
That the sons of men for them
Should have thought to prepare
Their fill on corpses.
And to them flew in their paths

The active devourer, the eagle,
Hoary in his feathers.
The willowed kite,
With his horned beak,
Sang the song of Hilda.
The noble warriors proceeded,
They in mail to the battle,
Furnished with shields,
With swelling banners.
They that awhile before
The reproach of the foreigners,
The taunts of the heathen,
Endured.
To them what had been hard
At that play of swords,
Was in all repaid
On the Assyrians;
When the Hebrews
Under the banners,
Had sallied
On their camps.
They then speedily
Let fly forth
Showers of arrows,
The serpents of Hilda,
From their horn bows;
The spears on the ground
Hard stormed.
Loud raged
The plunderers of battle;
They sent their darts
Into the throng of the chiefs
The angry land-owners
Acted as men
Against the odious race.
Stern-minded, they advanced
With fierce spirits:
They pressed on unsoftly,
With ancient hate,
Against the mead-weary foe.
With their hands the chiefs
Tore from their sheaths
The sheer, cross sword,
In its edges tried:
They slew earnestly
The Assyrian combatants.
Pursuing with hate,
None they spared
Of the army-folk,
Of the great kingdom,
Of the living men,
Whom they could overcome.

HISTORIC ODES.

THE BATTLE OF BRUNANBURGH.

A.D. 938.

Here Athelstan king,
Of earls the lord,
Rewarder of heroes,
And his brother eke,
Edmund atheling,
Elder of ancient race,
Slew in the fight,
With the edge of their swords,
The foe at Brumby!
The sons of Edward
Their board walls clove,
And hewed their banners,
With the wrecks of their hammers.
So were they taught
By kindred zeal,
That they at camp oft
'Gainst any robber
Their land should defend,
Their hoards and homes.
Pursuing fell
The Scottish clans;
The men of the fleet
In numbers fell;
'Midst the din of the field
The warrior swate.
Since the sun was up
In morning-tide,
Gigantic light!
Glad over grounds,
God's candle bright,
Eternal Lord!—
Till the noble creature
Set in the western main:
There lay many
Of the Northern heroes

Under a shower of arrows,
Shot over shields;
And Scotland's boast,
A Scythian race,
The mighty seed of Mars!
With chosen troops,
Throughout the day,
The West-Saxons fierce
Pressed on the loathed bands;
Hewed down the fugitives,
And scattered the rear
With strong mill-sharpened blades.
The Mercians, too,
The hard hand-play
Spared not to any
Of those that with Anlaf
Over the briny deep,
In the ship's bosom,
Sought this land
For the hardy fight.
Five kings lay
On the field of battle,
In bloom of youth,
Pierced with swords;
So seven eke
Of the earls of Anlaf
And of the ship's crew
Unnumbered crowds.
There was dispersed
The little band
Of hardy Scots,
The dread of Northern hordes;
Urged to the noisy deep
By unrelenting fate!
The king of the fleet,
With his slender craft,
Escaped with his life
On the felon flood;—
And so, too, Constantine,
The valiant chief,
Returned to the North
In hasty flight.
The hoary Hildrinc
Cared not to boast
Among his kindred.
Here was his remnant
Of relations and friends
Slain with the sword
In the crowded fight.
His son, too, he left
On the field of battle,
Mangled with wounds,
Young at the fight.
The fair-haired youth
Had no reason to boast
Of the slaughtering strife.
Nor old Inwood
And Anlaf the more,
With the wrecks of their army,
Could laugh and say,
That they on the field
Of stern command
Better workmen were,
In the conflict of banners,
The clash of spears,
The meeting of heroes,
And the rustling of weapons,
Which they on the field
Of slaughter played
With the sons of Edward.
The Northmen sailed
In their nailed ships,
A dreary remnant,
On the roaring sea;
Over deep water
Dublin they sought,
And Ireland's shores,
In great disgrace.
Such then the brothers,
Both together,
King and atheling,
Sought their country,
West-Saxon land,
In fight triumphant.
They left behind them,
Raw to devour,
The sallow kite,
The swarthy raven,
With horny nib,
And the hoarse vulture,
With the eagle swift
To consume his prey;
The greedy goshawk,
And that gray beast,
The wolf of the weald.
No slaughter yet
Was greater made
E'er in this island,
Of people slain
Before this same

With the edge of the sword;
As the books inform us
Of the old historians;
Since hither came
From the eastern shores
The Angles and Saxons,
Over the broad sea,
And Britain sought.—
Fierce battle-smiths,
O'ercame the Welsh,
Most valiant earls,
And gained the land.

THE DEATH OF KING EDGAR.

A.D. 975.

Here ended
His earthly dreams
Edgar, of Angles king;
Chose him other light,
Serene and lovely,
Spurning this frail abode,
A life that mortals
Here call lean
He quitted with disdain.
July the month
By all agreed,
In this our land,
Whoever were
In chronic lore
Correctly taught;
The day the eighth,
When Edgar young,
Rewarder of heroes,
His life—his throne—resigned.
Edward his son,
Unwaxen child,
Of earls the prince,
Succeeded then
To England's throne.
Of royal race,
Ten nights before,
Departed hence
Cyneward the good,—
Prelate of manners mild.
Well known to me
In Mercia then,
How low on earth
God's glory fell
On every side:
Chased from the land
His servants fled,—
Their wisdom scorned;
Much grief to him
Whose bosom glowed
With fervent love
Of great Creation's Lord!
Neglected then
The God of wonders,
Victor of victors,
Monarch of heaven,—
His laws by man transgressed!
Then, too, was driven
Oslac beloved,
An exile far
From his native land
Over the rolling waves,—
Over the ganet-bath,
Over the water-throng,
The abode of the whale,—
Fair-haired hero,
Wise and eloquent,
Of home bereft!
Then, too, was seen,
High in the heavens,
The star on his station,
That far and wide
Wise men call—
Lovers of truth
And heavenly lore—
Cometa by name.
Widely was spread
God's vengeance then
Throughout the land,
And famine scoured the hills.
May heaven's Guardian,
The glory of angels,
Avert these ills,
And give us bliss again;
That bliss to all
Abundance yields
From earth's choice fruits,
Throughout this happy isle.

KING ALFRED'S METRES OF BOETHIUS.

METRE III.

Alas! in how grim
And how bottomless
A gulf labors
The darkling mind,
When it the strong
Storms lash
Of worldly cares;
When it, thus contending,
Its proper light
Once forsakes,
And in woe forgets
The everlasting joy,
And rushes into the darkness
Of this world,
Afflicted with cares!
Thus has it now befallen
This my mind;
Now it no more knows
Of good for God,
But lamentations
For the external world:
To it is need of comfort.

METRE VI.

Then Wisdom again
His treasury of words unlocked,
Sung various maxims,
And thus expressed himself:
When the sun
Clearest shines,
Serenest in the heaven,
Quickly are obscured
Over the earth
All other stars:
Because their brightness is not
Brightness at all,
Compared with
The sun's light.
When mild blows
The south and western wind
Under the clouds,
Then quickly grow
The flowers of the field,
Joyful that they may.
But the stark storm,
When it strong comes
From north and east,
It quickly takes away
The beauty of the rose.
And also the northern storm,
Constrained by necessity,
That it is strongly agitated,
Lashes the spacious sea
Against the shore.
Alas! that on earth
Aught of permanent
Work in the world
Does not ever remain.

METRE XXI.

Well, O children of men,
Throughout the middle earth!
Let every one of the free
Aspire to the
Eternal good
Which we are speaking about,
And to the felicities
That we are telling of.
Let him who is now
Straitly bound
With the vain love
Of this great
Middle earth,
Also quickly seek for himself
Full freedom,
That he may arrive
At the felicities,
For the good of souls.
For that is the only rest
Of all labors,
The desirable haven
To the lofty ships
Of our mind;
A great tranquil station;
That is the only haven
Which ever is,
After the waves
Of our labors,

And every storm,
Always calm.
That is the refuge
And the only comfort
Of all the wretched,
After these
Worldly labors.
That is a pleasant place,
After these miseries,
To possess.
But I well know,
That neither golden vessels,
Nor heaps of silver,
Nor precious stones,
Nor the wealth of the middle earth,
The eyes of the mind
Ever enlighten,
Nor aught improve
Their sharpness
To the contemplation
Of true felicities;
But they rather
The mind's eyes
Of every man
Make blind in their breasts,
Than make them clearer.
For every thing
That in this present
Life delights
Are poor
Earthly things,
Ever fleeting.
But wonderful is that
Splendor and brightness,
Which every one of things
With splendor enlightens,
And afterward
Entirely rules.
The Ruler wills not
That our souls shall perish;
But he himself will them
With a ray illumine,
The Ruler of life!
If, then, any man,
With the clear eyes
Of his mind, may
Ever behold
The clear brightness
Of heaven's light,
Then will he say,
That the brightness of the sun
Is darkness
To every man,
Compared with
That great light
Of God Almighty,
That is to every soul
Eternal without end,
To blessed souls.

METRE XXII.

Whosoever after truth
With skill,
Will inwardly
Inquire,
So profoundly,
That no man may
Dissipate it;
Nor any earthly thing
At all corrupt it;
He shall first
Seek in himself
That which he some while
Before sought
About him;
He must afterward seek that
Within his mind;
And forsake,
As he soonest may,
Every anxiety,
Which to him is profitless;
And resort,
As he best may,
Entirely to this alone,
Namely, his mind.
He must say to his mind,
That it may find,
Entirely in itself,
That which it oftenest now
Around it
Every-where seeks,—
Every one of goods.
He will then find
Evil and useless
All that he had
In his breast,
Long before;
Even as clearly

As he on the sun may
With present eyes
Look.
And he also will perceive
His understanding
Lighter and more bright
Than is the beam
Of the sun in summer,
When the gem of the sky,
The serene heaven star,
Clearest shines.
For the sins and heaviness,
And the vices
Of the body,
Altogether may not
From the mind draw
In any man
Virtue.
Though now in every man
The sins and heaviness,
And the vices
Of the body,
Often trouble
The mind of men,
And most especially
With the evil
Forgetfulness;
And with the mist of error,
Before the mind alarms
The dreary intellect
Of every man,
That it so bright cannot
Glitter and shine,
As it would if
It power possessed.
Yet is some grain
Of the seed of truth
Always retained
In the soul,
While united dwells
The soul in the body.
The grain of this seed
Is always excited
By inquiry,
And, moreover,
By good instruction,
If it shall grow.
How can any man
Find an answer
To any thing,
At least with reason,
Though after it
Any man should
Wisely inquire,
If he has not
Aught in his mind,
Much or little
Of wisdom
Or prudence?
But there is no man
That altogether is
Of prudence
So bereaved,
That he any answer
Cannot find
In his mind,
If he be questioned.
Therefore it is a true saying,
Which formerly our Plato,
The ancient philosopher,
Said to us;
He said that every one
Unmindful
Of Wisdom
Should immediately
Turn to himself
To his own
Memory;
He may then
In his breast
Wisdom
Find in his mind,
Closely concealed
By the trouble
Of his mind,
Every day,
Most especially;
And by the heaviness
Of his body;
And by the cares,
Which in the breast agitate
Men's minds
Every moment.

METRE XXIII.

Lo! now on earth is he
In every thing
A happy man,
If he may see

The clearest
Heaven-shining stream,
The noble fountain
Of all good;
And of himself
The swarthy mist,
The darkness of the mind,
Can dispel!
We will as yet,
With God's help,
With old and fabulous
Stories instruct
Thy mind;
That thou the better mayest
Discover to the skies
The right path,
To the eternal region
Of our souls.

METRE XXVII.

Why will ye ever
With unjust hatred
Your mind trouble,
As the ocean's
Waves lift up
The ice-cold sea,
And agitate it through the wind?
Why upbraid ye
Your fortune,
That she no power possesses?
Why cannot ye now wait
For the bitter state
Of that death
Which for you the Lord ordained
Now he each day
Hastens toward you?
Cannot ye see
That he is always seeking
After every
Earthly offspring,
Beasts and birds?
Death also in like manner
After mankind seeks.
Throughout this middle earth,
Terrific hunter!
And devours in pursuit.
He will not any track
Ever forsake,
Until he has seized
That which he before
Sought after.
It is a wretched thing,
That citizens
Cannot wait for him;
Unhappy men
Are rather desirous
To anticipate him:
As birds,
Or wild beasts,
When they contend,
Each one would
The other destroy.
But it is wicked
In every man,
That he another
With his thoughts
Should hate in his breast,
Like a bird or beast.
But it would be most right,
That every man
Should render to other
Dwellers in the world
Reward proportionable
To his deserts,
In every thing:
That is, that he should love
Every one of the good,
As he best may;
And have mercy on the wicked,
As we before said.
He should the man
With his mind love,
And his vices
All hate,
And destroy,
As he soonest may.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE EXILE'S COMPLAINT.

I of myself this lay recite
Full sadly,
My own fortune:
I that may say,
What miseries I've sustained,
Since I grew up,
New or old,
Yet not more than now.
Ever have I the penalty gained
Of my wanderings.
First my lord departed
Hence from his people,
Over the billows' play;
I had nightly care,
Where my chieftain
In the world might be.
When I departed journeying,
To seek my lord,
A friendless exile,
For my sad misery
Resolved this man's
Kinsmen to devise,
Through dark counsel
That they might part us:
That we most distant
In the world's realm
Might live, most estranged,
And it irked me.
Promised my lord,
Herheard, me to take.
I had dear ones few,
In this country,
Kind friends;
Therefore is my spirit sad,
When I to myself full like
A man found
Unfortunate,
Sad in soul,
His mind concealing,
Death meditating,
His bearing kind.
Full oft we promised
That us naught should part
Save death alone,
Naught else:
That is again changed,
Is now as it had not been
Our friendship.
I must far enough
For my much-loved friend
Enmities endure.
They bid me dwell
In the forest grove
Under the oak tree,
In the earth-cavern.
Old is this earth-hall;
I am all wearied:
Dim are the dells,
The downs high,
Unpleasant the town-dwellings,
With briers o'ergrown,
The house joyless.
Full oft me here heavily o'erwhelmed
My lord's departure.
My friends are in the earth;
The once dear living ones
The grave inhabit.
Then I ere dawn
Alone go
Under the oak tree,
Among these earth-caves;
There I may sit
The long summer day;
There I can weep
My exile journeyings,
My many hardships;
For I may never
From my mind's
Sorrow rest,
Nor from all the weariness
Which me in this life hath overwhelmed.
Ever must a young man be
Sad of mind?
Hard-hearted's thought!
Shall such have blithe
Blithe looks,
Even when care of breast,
Constant sorrows, he should endure:
Let be of himself along
All his worldly joy,
Be he full widely foe
Of the far country?

There my friend sits,
Under a rocky shelter,
Whitened with the storm—
My friend weary in spirit—
With water whelmed;
In his drear hall
My friend endures
Great mental care,
He too oft remembers
A more joyous dwelling.
Woe is to him who must
(From weariness)
His friends await.

THE FORTUNES OF MEN.

Full often it falls out,
By fortune from God,
That a man and a maiden
In this world may marry,
Find cheer in the child
Whom they care for and cherish,
Tenderly tend it,
Until the time comes,
Beyond the first years,
When the young limbs increasing,
Grown firm with life's fullness,
Are formed for their work.
Fond father and mother,
So guide it and feed it,
Give gifts to it, clothe it:
God only can know
What lot to its latter days
Life has to bring.
To some that make music
In life's morning hour
Pining days are appointed
Of plaint at the close.
One the wild wolf shall eat,
Hoary haunter of wastes:
His mother shall mourn
The small strength of a man.
One shall sharp hunger slay;
One shall the storms beat down;
One be destroyed by darts,
One die in war.
One shall live losing
The light of his eyes,
Feel blindly with fingers;
And one, lame of foot,
With sinew-wound wearily
Wasteth away,
Musing and mourning,
With death in his mind.

One, failing feathers,
Shall fall from the height
Of the tall forest tree:
Yet he trips as though flying,
Plays proudly in air
Till he reaches the point
Where the woodgrowth is weak;
Life then whirls in his brain;
Bereft of his reason,
He sinks to the root,
Falls flat on the ground,
His life fleeting away.
Afoot on the far-ways,
His food in his hand,
One shall go grieving,
And great be his need,
Press dew on the paths
Of the perilous lands
Where the stranger may strike,
Where live none to sustain.
All shun the desolate
For being sad.

One the great gallows shall
Have in its grasp,
Strained in stark agony
Till the soul's stay,
The bone-house, is bloodily
All broken up;
When the harsh raven hacks
Eyes from the head,
The sallow-coated slits
The soulless man.
Nor can he shield from shame,
Scare with his hands,
Off from their eager feast,
Prowlers of air.
Lost is his life to him;
No breath is left;
Bleached on the gallows-beam
Bides he his doom;
Cold death-mists close round him
Called the Accursed.

One shall burn in the bale-fire,
The bright cruel flame
Shall devour the man destined
To die in its maw;
In the red raging glow,
Quick the rending of life;
The woman shall wail
And shall weep when she sees
Her boy, her beloved one,
Laid over the brands.

One shall die by the dagger,
In wrath, drenched with ale,
Wild through wine, on the mead bench,
Too swift with his words;
Through the hand that brings beer,
Through the gay boon companion,
His mouth has no measure,
His mood no restraint;
Too lightly his life
Shall the wretched one lose,
Undergo the great ill,
Be left empty of joy.
When they speak of him slain
By the sweetness of mead,
His comrades shall call him
One killed by himself.

To one God shall grant
To get through in his youth
All the days of distress,
That, his sorrow dispersed,
His old age becomes easy
With use of his goods,
His life becomes lucky
And gladdened with love,
His caskets and mead-cups
As costly and full
As any can earn
To bestow on his own.

So does God diversely
Deal out to men
Their lots over earth;
For so He, the Almighty Lord,
Will appoint each his portion,
Provide each his share.
Some have good hap,
And some hard days of toil;
Some glad glow of youth,
And some glory in war;
Strength in the strife;
Some sling the stone, some shoot,
Far shines the fame;
Some fling the dice with skill,
Quick at the bright board;
Some grow wise in books.
Rare gift for goldsmith's work
Is given to one;
He will make hard and handsome
The arms of a high king
Of Britain, whose bounty
Repays with broad lands,
A much-relished requital.
And one shall rejoice
Who has charge from a chief,
And makes cheer on the bench
With a crowd of brave comrades
In martial carouse.

One shall handle the harp,
At the feet of his hero
Sit and win wealth
From the will of his lord;
Still quickly contriving
The throb of the chords,
The nail nimbly makes music,
Awakes a glad noise,
While the heart of the harper
Throbs, hurried by zeal.
One shall find how fierce wild birds,
How falcons, are tamed,
Have the hawk on the hand.
Till the rough haggard learns
To be social, he sets
Silver rings on his feet,
And feeds thus in fetters
The feather-proud bird;
The air-flyer flutters
Confined to a perch,
Till the Welsh bird is wrought,
By what's worn and what's done,
To be meek with the master
Who gives him his meat,
And hold to the hands
Of the dwellers in homes.

So the good God of each of us
Governs and shapes,
Above this our earth,

The employments of men;
Divides and disposes,
And deals out to each
Of his privileged people
A portion in life.
Then to God let each gratefully
Give now his thanks,
For his manifold mercies
Apportioned to man.

THE GRAVE.

For thee was a house built
Ere thou wert born,
For thee was a mold shapen,
Ere thou of mother camest.
Its height is not determined,
Nor its depth measured,
Nor is it closed up,
However long it may be,
Until I thee bring
Where thou shalt remain,
Until I shall measure thee
And the sod of earth.
Thy house is not
Highly built (timbered,)
It is unhigh and low;
When thou art in it
The heel-ways are low,
The side-ways unhigh.
The roof is built
Thy breast full nigh;
So thou shalt in earth
Dwell full cold,
Dim, and dark,
That clean putrifies.
Doorless is that house,
And dark it is within;
There thou art fast detained,
And death holds the key.
Loathly is that earth-house,
And grim to dwell in;
There thou shalt dwell,
And worms shall share thee.
Thus thou art laid
And leavest thy friends;
Thou hast no friend
That will come to thee,
Who will ever inquire
How that house liketh thee,
Who shall ever open
For thee the door
And seek thee,
For soon thou becomest loathly
And hateful to look upon.

THE SOUL AFTER DEATH.

That shall of joys be greatest,
When they at first shall meet
The angel and the happy soul;
When it resigns the joys of earth,
Forsakes these frail delights,
And from the body it shall part.
Then shall the angel speak,
(Shall have an elder form,)
One spirit greet the other,
Announce to it God's errand:
Now thou may'st go
Whither thou yearnedst
Long and often;
I shall lead thee;
The ways shall be pleasant to thee,
And glory's light
Bright disclosed;
Thou art now a traveler
To that holy home,
Where rue never cometh,
A refuge from afflictions;
But there is joy of angels,
Peace and happiness,
And souls' rest;
And there for evermore
May be glad,
Be joyful with the Lord,
Those who his judgments here
Fulfill on earth;
He for them reward eternal
Holdeth in heaven
Where the highest
King of all kings
O'er the cities swayeth.

THE RUIN.

Wondrous is this wall-stone;
The fates have broken it,
Have burst the burgh-place.

Perishes the work of giants,
The roofs are fallen,
The towers tottering,
The hoar gate-towers despoiled,
Rime on the lime,
Shattered the battlements,
Riven, fallen,
Under the Eotnish race;
The earth-grave has
Its powerful workmen
Decayed, departed,
The hard of gripe are fallen,
To a hundred generations
Of people are passed away.
Oft its walls withstood
Ræghar and Readfah.
Chieftain after other,
Rising amid storms.
Rapidly prone it fell;

* * * *

Bright were the burgh-dwellings,
Many its princely halls,
High its steepled splendor;
There was martial sound great,
Many a mead-hall
Full of human joys,
Until that changed
Obdurate fate:
They perished in wide slaughter.
Came pernicious days;
Death destroyed all
Their renowned warriors.
Their fortress is become
Waste foundations;
Their burgh-place has perished;
Atoning bowed
Their bands to earth:
Therefore these courts are dreary,
And its purple arch
With its tiles shades
The roost, proud of its diadem.
At its fall the plain shrank,
Broken into mounds.
There many a chief of old,
Joyous and gold-bright,
Splendidly decorated,
Proud and with wine elate,
In warlike decorations shone;
Looked on treasure, on silver,
On curious gems,
On luxury, on wealth,
On precious stone,
On this bright burgh
Of a broad realm.
The stone courts stood—
The stream with heat o'erthrew them
With its wide burning;
The wall all encompassed
In its bright bosom.
There the baths were
Hot on the breast.

A RIDDLE.

I am greater
Than this mid-earth,
Less than an earth-worm,
Lighter than the moon,
Swifter than the sun;
The seas are all,
The rivers, in my embrace,
And this lap of earth,
The green plains.
The depths I touch,
Under hell descend,
Mount o'er the heavens,
The abode of glory
On all sides I reach,
O'er the abode of angels;
The earth I fill,
All mid-earth,
And the sea-streams,
On all sides with myself.
Say, what am I called?

SUMMER IS I-CUMEN IN.*

Summer is i-cumen in,
Llude sing cuccu;
Groweth sed and bloweth med,
And springth the wde nu,
Sing cuccu, cuccu.

Awe bleteth after lomb,
Lhouth after calue cu;

*This is the most ancient song that appears in the English manuscripts with musical notes annexed. The words belong to the early part of the tenth century; the music is supposed to be of the fifteenth century.

Bulluc sterteth, bucke verteth;
Murie sing cuccu,
Cuccu, cuccu.
Wel singes thu cuccu,
Ne swik thu naner nu;
Sing cuccu nu,
Sing cuccu.

THE SONG OF SUMMER.

Summer is coming in,
Loud sing, cuckow;
Groweth weed, and bloweth mead,
And springeth the wood now,
Sing, cuckow, cuckow.

Ewe bleateth after lamb,
Loweth calf after cow,
Bullock starteth, buck departeth;
Merry sing, cuckow,
Cuckow, cuckow.
Well singeth the cuckow,
Nor cease to sing now;
Sing, cuckow, now,
Sing, cuckow.

ANGLO-SAXON PROSE.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Fæder úre, thú the eart on heofenum, si thin nama gehalgod. To-becume thin ríce. Geweorthe thin willa on eorthan, swa swa on heofenum. Urne dæghwamlican hlaf syle us to-daeg. And forgyf ús úre gyltas, swa swa we forgifath úrum gyltendum. And ne geléde thu us on costnunge, ac alys us of yfle: Sothlice.

KING ALFRED ON KING-CRAFT.

The Mind then answered, and thus said: O Reason, indeed thou knowest that covetousness and the greatness of this earthly power never well pleased me, nor did I altogether very much yearn after this earthly authority. But nevertheless I was desirous of materials for the work which I was commanded to perform; that was, that I might honorably and fitly guide and exercise the power which was committed to me. Moreover, thou knowest that no man can show any skill, nor exercise or control any power, without tools and materials. There are of every craft the materials without which man cannot exercise the craft. These, then, are a king's materials and his tools to reign with: that he have his land well peopled; he must have prayer-men, and soldiers, and workmen. Thou knowest that without these tools no king can show his craft. This is also his materials which he must have besides the tools; provisions for the three classes. This is, then, their provision; land to inhabit, and gifts, and weapons, and meat, and ale, and clothes, and whatsoever is necessary for the three classes. He cannot without these preserve the tools, nor without the tools accomplish any of those things which he is commanded to perform. Therefore I was desirous of materials wherewith to exercise the power, that my talents and power should not be forgotten and concealed. For every craft and every power soon becomes old, and is passed over in silence, if it be without wisdom: for no man can accomplish any craft without wisdom. Because whatsoever is done through folly, no one can ever reckon for craft. This is now especially to be said: that I wished to live honorably while I lived, and after my life to leave to the men who were after me, my memory in good works.

ÆLFRIC'S HOMILY ON ST. GREGORY'S DAY.

Gregory the Holy Father, the apostle of the English nation, on this present day, after manifold labors and divine studies, happily ascended to God's kingdom. He is rightly called the apostle of the English people, inasmuch as he through his counsel and commission rescued us from the worship of the devil, and converted us to the belief of God. Many holy books speak of his illustrious conversation and his pious life: among these the "History of England," which King Alfred translated from the Latin into English. This book speaketh plainly enough of this holy man. Nevertheless we will now say something in few words concerning him: because the aforesaid book is not known to you all, although it is translated into English. This blessed Father Gregory was born of noble and religious parents. His ancestors were of the Roman nobility, his father called Gordianus, and Felix, that pious bishop, was his fifth father. He was, as we have said, in respect of the world, nobly descended: but he adorned, and exceeded his high birth, with a holy conversation and good works. Gregory is a Greek name, which signifies in the Latin tongue Vigilantius, that is in English Watchful. He was very diligent in God's commandments, while he himself lived most devoutly, and he was earnestly concerned for promoting the advantage of many nations, and made known unto them the way of life. He was from his childhood instructed in the knowledge of books, and he so prosperously succeeded in his studies, that in all the city of Rome there was none esteemed to be like him. He was most diligent in following the example of his teachers, and not forgetful, but fixed his learning in a retentive memory. He sucked in with a thirsty desire the flowing learning, which he often, after some time, with a throat sweeter than honey, and with an agreeable eloquence, poured out. In his younger years, when his youth might naturally make him love the things of this world, then began he to dedicate himself to God, and with all his desires to breathe after the inheritance of a heavenly life. For after his father's departure he erected six monasteries in Sicily; and the seventh he built in the city of Rome, n which he himself lived as a regular, under the government of the abbot. These seven monasteries he adorned with his own substance, and plentifully endowed them for their daily subsistence. The remainder of his estate he bestowed on God's poor, and he exchanged his nobility of birth for heavenly glory. He was used before his conversion to pass along the city of Rome in garments of silk, sparkling with gems, and adorned with rich embroidery of gold and red. But after his conversion * he ministered to God's poor, and himself took upon him the profession of poverty in a mean habit. So perfectly did he behave himself at the beginning of his conversion, that he might hereafter be reputed in the number of perfect saints. He observed much abstinence in meat and drink, in watching, and in frequent devotions. He suffered, moreover, continual indisposition of body, and the more severely he was oppressed with his present infirmities, the more earnestly did he desire eternal life. Then the Pope which at that time sat in the Apostolic See, when he perceived that the holy Gregory was greatly increased in spiritual virtues, he took him from convers-

* *Conversion* from life in the world to life in the monastery. Conversion simply means a change from one state to another. We can convert gold into paper; and here a Roman prætor with money at command is converted into a monk vowed to poverty. Conversion from one form of religious belief to another, though the sense in which the word is commonly used by writers on religion, is by no means the one sense to which the word is limited.—MORLEY, *Library of English Literature.*

ing with monks, and appointed him to be his assistant, having ordained him a deacon.

It happened at some time, as it often doth, that some English merchants brought their merchandises to Rome: and Gregory passing along the street to the Englishmen, taking a view of their goods, he there beheld among their merchandises slaves set out to sale. They were white-complexioned, and men of fair countenance, having noble heads of hair. And Gregory, when he saw the beauty of the young men, inquired from what country they were brought; and the men said from England, and that all the men in that nation were as beautiful. Then Gregory asked them whether the men of that land were Christians, or heathens; and the men said unto him they were heathens. Gregory then, fetching a long sigh from the very bottom of his heart, said, "Alas! alas! that men of so fair a complexion should be subject to the prince of darkness." After that, Gregory inquired how they called the nation from whence they came. To which he was answered, that they were called Angle, (that is, English.) Then said he, "Rightly they are called Angle, because they have the beauty of angels, and therefore it is very fit that they should be the companions of angels in heaven." Yet still Gregory inquired what the shire was named from which the young men were brought. It was told him that the men of that shire were called Deiri. Gregory answered, "Well they are called Deiri, because they are delivered from wrath and called to the mercy of Christ." Yet again he inquired what was the name of the king of their province; he was answered, that the king's name was Ælla. Therefore Gregory, playing upon the words in allusion to the name, said, "It is fit that Hallelujia be sung in that land in praise of the Almighty Creator." Gregory then went to the bishop of the apostolic see, and desired him that he would send some instructors to the English people, that they might be converted to Christ by the grace of God: and said that he himself was ready to undertake that work, if the Pope should think it fit. But the Pope could not consent to it, although he altogether approved of it; because the Roman citizens would not suffer so worthy and learned a doctor to leave the city quite, and take so long a pilgrimage.

After this it happened that a great plague came upon the Roman people, and first of all seized upon Pope Pelagius, and without delay took him off. Moreover, after the death of this Pope the destruction was so great among the people that every-where throughout the city the houses stood desolate, and without inhabitants.

Nevertheless, it was not fit that the Roman city should be without a bishop. But all the people unanimously chose the holy Gregory to that honor, although he with all his power opposed it. Then Gregory sent an epistle to Mauricius the Emperor, to whose child he had stood godfather, and earnestly desired and beseeched him, that he would never suffer the people to exalt him to the glory of that high promotion, because he feared that he, through the greatness of the charge and the worldly glory which he had some time before renounced, might again be ensnared. But the Emperor's high marshal Germanus intercepted the letter and tore it in pieces, and afterward told the emperor that all the people had chosen Gregory to be Pope. Then Mauricius the Emperor returned thanks to Almighty God for this, and gave orders for his consecration. But Gregory betook himself to flight, and lay hid in a cave. Nevertheless they found him out, and carried him by force to St. Peter's Church, that he might there be consecrated to popedom. Then Gregory, before his consecration, by reason of the increasing pestilence, exhorted the Roman people to repentance in these words: "My most

beloved brethren, it behooveth us, that that rod of God which we ought to have dreaded when we only expected it would be laid upon us, should now at least raise in us some concern when it is present and we have felt it. Let our grief open us a way to a true conversion, and let that punishment which we endure break the hardness of our hearts. Behold now this people is slain with the sword of heavenly anger, and each of them one by one is destroyed by a sudden slaughter. For the disease does not go before death, but you see that each man's death prevents the lingering of a disease. The slain are seized by death before they can have an opportunity of sighing and lamentation, to express their sincere repentance. Wherefore let each man take care how he comes into the presence of the mighty Judge, who will not bewail the evil which he has performed. (Almost) all the dwellers upon earth are taken away, and their houses stand empty. Fathers and mothers stand over the dead bodies of their children, and their heirs step before them to death. Let us earnestly betake ourselves to lamentation with true repentance now while we may, before this dreadful slaughter strike us. Let us call to mind whatever errors we have been guilty of, and O! let us do penance with tears for that which we have done amiss. Let us reconcile God's favor to us by confessing our sins, as the prophet warneth us, 'Let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God;' that is, that we ought to lift up [or present] the sincerity of our devotions with an earnest of good works. He giveth you confidence in your fear, who speaks to you by his prophet: 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked should turn from his way and live.' Let not any man despair of himself for the greatness of his sin, forasmuch as the old guilt of the people of Nineveh was expiated by their three days' repentance: and the penitent thief by his dying words attained to the reward of eternal life. O let us then turn our hearts to God! speedily is the Judge inclined to our petitions, if we from our perverseness be set straight. O let us stand with earnest lamentations against the threatening sword of so great a judgment. Certainly perseverance is pleasing to the just Judge, although it is not grateful to men: because the righteous and merciful God will have us with earnest petitions to request his mercy, and he will not so much as we deserve be angry with us. Of this he speaketh by his prophet: 'Call upon me in the day of thy trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.' God himself is his own witness, that he will have compassion on him that calleth on him; who admonishes us that it is our duty to call upon him. For this cause, my most dearly beloved brethren, let us come together on the fourth day of this week early in the morning, and with a devout mind, and with tears, sing seven Litanies, that our angry Judge may spare us, when he seeth that we ourselves take vengeance on our sins." So that while the whole multitude, as well of the priestly order, and of the monastic, as of the laity, according to the command of the holy Gregory, were come on the Wednesday to the seven-fold Litany, the aforesaid pestilence raged so fast, that fourscore men departed this transitory life at the very instant the people were singing the Litany. But the holy priest did not cease to advise the people not to desist from their supplications, until that God's mercy should assuage the raging plague.

In the meantime Gregory, since he took upon him the popedom, called to mind what he formerly had thought of concerning the English nation, and finished that most beloved work. Nevertheless, he might not on any account be altogether absent from the Roman bishop's see. Whereupon he sent other messengers, approved servants of God, to this island, and he himself, by his manifold prayers

and exhortations, brought it to pass, that the preaching of these messengers went abroad, and bore fruit to God. The messengers were thus named: Augustinus, Mellitus, Laurentius, Petrus, Johannes, Justus. These doctors the holy Pope Gregory sent, with many other monks, to the English people, and he persuaded them to the voyage in these words: "Be not ye afraid through the fatigue of so long a journey, or through what wicked men may discourse concerning it; but with all steadfastness and zeal and earnest affection, by the grace of God, perfect the work ye have begun; and be ye assured, that the recompense of your eternal reward is so much greater, by how much the greater difficulties you have undergone in fulfilling the will of God. Be obedient with all humility in all things to Augustine, whom we have set over you to be your abbot. It will be for your souls' health, so far as ye fulfill his admonitions. Almighty God through his grace protect you, and grant that I may behold the fruit of your labor in the eternal reward, and that I may be found together with you in the joy of your reward. Because although I cannot labor with you, yet I have a good will to share with you in your labor." Augustine then with his companions, which are reckoned to be about forty, that journeyed with him by Gregory's command, proceeded on their journey until they arrived prosperously in this island. In those days reigned King Æthelbyrht in the city of Canterbury, whose kingdom was stretched from the great river Humber to the south sea. Augustine had taken interpreters in the kingdom of the Franks, as Gregory had ordered him; and he, by the mouths of the interpreters, preached God's word to the king and his people, namely, how our merciful Saviour by his own sufferings redeemed this guilty world, and to all that believe hath opened an entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

Then King Æthelbyrht answered Augustine, and said, that those were fair words and promises which he gave him: but that he could not so suddenly leave the ancient customs which he and the English people had held. He said, he might freely preach the heavenly doctrine to his people, and that he would allow maintenance to him and his companions: and gave him a dwelling in the city of Canterbury, which was the head city in all his kingdom. Then began Augustine with his monks to imitate the life of the apostles, with frequent prayers, watchings, and fastings, serving God, and preaching the word of life with all diligence; despising all earthly things as unprofitable to them, providing only so much as was necessary for their common subsistence, agreeable to what they taught living themselves, and for the love of the truth which they preached being ready to suffer persecution, and death itself, if it were necessary. Therefore very many believed, and were baptized in the name of God, admiring the simplicity of their innocent course of life, and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine. Afterward King Æthelbyrht was much pleased with the purity of their lives, and their delightful promises, which were indeed confirmed by many miracles. And he believing was baptized, and he reverenced the Christians, and looked upon them as men of a heavenly polity. Nevertheless he would not force any one to receive Christianity, because he had found upon inquiry from the ministers of his salvation, that the service of Christ ought not to be forced, but voluntary. Then began very many daily to hearken to the divine preaching, and leave their heathenism, and to join themselves to Christ's Church, believing in him. In the meantime Augustine went over sea to Etherius, Archbishop of Arles, by whom he was consecrated Archbishop of the English, as Gregory before had given him direction. Augustine being consecrated, returned to his bishopric, and sent messengers to

Rome, to assure the blessed Gregory that the English people had received Christianity; and he also in writing made many inquiries, as touching the manner, how he ought to behave himself toward the new converts. Whereupon Gregory gave many thanks to God with a joyful mind, that that had happened to the English nation which himself had so earnestly desired. And he sent embassadors to the believing King Æthelbyrht, with letters and many presents: and other letters he sent to Augustine, with answers to all the things after which he had inquired, and advised him in these words: "Most dearly beloved brother, I know that the Almighty hath by you shown forth many wonders to the people whom he hath chosen, for which you have reason both to rejoice and to be afraid. You may very prudently rejoice that the souls of this people by outward miracles are brought to have inward grace. Nevertheless, be afraid; that your mind be not lifted up with arrogance by reason of the miracles which God hath wrought by you, and you then fall into vain-glory within, when you are extolled with outward respect." Gregory sent also to Augustine holy presents of sacred vestments and of books, and the relics of the apostles and martyrs, and ordered that his successors should fetch the pall of the archbishopric from the apostolical see of the Roman Church.

After this Augustine placed bishops out of those that had accompanied him in each city of the English nation, and they have remained promoting the Christian faith continually unto this day. The holy Gregory composed many divine treatises, and with great diligence instructed God's people in the way to eternal life, and wrought many miracles in his lifetime, and behaved himself in a most glorious manner upon the episcopal throne thirteen years, and six months, and ten days, and afterward as on this day departed to the eternal throne of the heavenly kingdom, in which he liveth with God Almighty, world without end. Amen.

AN ANGLO-SAXON SERMON.

Dearest men! I entreat, and would humbly teach you that you should grieve now for your sins, because in the future life our tears will tell for naught. Hear the Lord now, who invites and will grant us forgiveness. Here he is very gentle with us; there he will be severe. Here his mild-heartedness is over us; there will be an eternal judgment. Here is transient joy; there will be perpetual sorrow.

Study, my beloved, those things which are about to come to you. Humble yourselves here, that you be not abased hereafter. Ah, dearest men! who is so hard of heart that he cannot weep at the punishments that may succeed, and dread their occurrence? What is better to us in this world than to be penitent for our transgressions, and to redeem them by alms-giving? This world and all within it pass away, and then with our soul alone we must satisfy the Almighty God. The father cannot then help the son, nor the child the parent, but each will be judged according to his own deeds.

O man, what are you doing? Be not like the dumb cattle. O think and remember how great a separation the Deity has placed between us and them. He sends to us an understanding soul, but they have none. Watch, then, O man! Pray and entreat while thou may. Remember that for thee the Lord descended from the high heaven to the most lowly state, that he might raise thee to that exalted life. Gold and silver cannot aid us from those grim and cruel torments, from those flames that will never be extinguished, and from those serpents that

never die. There they are whetting their bloody teeth, to wound and tear our bodies without mercy, when the great trumpet shall sound, and the dreadful voice exclaim, "Arise, and behold the mighty and the terrible King! You that have been steadfast and are chosen, arise! Lo! your heavenly Master comes. Now you shall see him whom you loved before you became dust. Come, and partake a glory which no eye has seen, and no ear has heard of. But, you wicked and impious, arise you, and fall abandoned in that deep and infernal pit, where misery forever must be your happiness and honor."

O, how miserable and joyless will those become who neglected the divine commandments, to hear this fearful sentence! Always should these things be before our eyes. Where are the kings that once triumphed, and all the mighty of the earth? Where are their treasures? Where is their splendid apparel? O, for how short a life are they now brought to an endless death! For what a transient glory have they earned a lasting sorrow! How paltry the profit for which they have bought these wretched torments! How momentary was the laughter that has been changed to these bitter and burning tears! . . .

A holy man had once a spiritual vision. He saw a soul on the point of being driven out of a body, but she dared not leave it, because she saw an execrable fiend standing before her. "What are you doing?" cried the devil. "Why do you not come out? Do you hope that Michael the archangel will come with his company of angels, and carry you soon away?" Then another devil answered and said, "You need not fear that. I know his works, and, day and night, was always with him."

The wretched soul, seeing this, began to shriek and cry, "Woe! woe! wretched me, why was I ever created? Why did I ever enter this foul and polluted body?" She looked at her body, and exclaimed, "Miserable corpse! it was thou that didst seize the wealth of the stranger, and wast ever heaping up treasure. It was thou that wouldest deck thyself with costly raiment. When thou wast all scarlet, I was all black; when thou wast merry, I was sad; when thou didst laugh, I wept. O wretched thou, what art thou now but a loathsome mass, the food of worms! Thou mayest rest a considerable time on the earth, but I shall go groaning and miserable to hell."

The devil then exclaimed, "Pierce his eye, because with his eye-sight he was active in all injustice. Pierce his mouth, because with that he ate and drank and talked as he lusted. Pierce his heart, because neither pity, religion, nor the love of God was ever in it."

While the soul was suffering these things, a great splendor shone before her, and she asked what the brightness meant. The devil told her it came from the celestial regions. "And you shall go through these dwellings most bright and fair, but must not stay there. You shall hear the angelic choirs, and see the radiance of the holy; but there you cannot dwell." Again the wretched soul exclaimed, "Woe to me that I ever saw the light of the human world!" . . .

My dearest men! Let us then remember that the life we now live is short, sinful, frail, falling, wretched, and deceitful to all that love it. We live in trouble, we die in sorrow; and when it ends, they also who would not repent and give alms must go to torment, and there suffer an immeasurable punishment for their misdeeds. There the afflicted soul will hang over hot flames, and be beaten and bound, and thrown into the blackest place, especially they who will show no mercy now. But let us turn ourselves to a better state, and earn an eternal kingdom with Christ and his saints, for ever and ever, world without end. Amen.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EARLY NORMAN PERIOD. 1066 A.D. TO 1154 A.D.

I. The Norman Conquest.

GUIDE ANALYSIS.

I. The Battle of Hastings.
   1. The Saxons and Normans on the eve of battle.
   2. Contrast between the Saxon and Norman military operations.
   3. Death of Harold.
   4. Person and character of Harold.

II. The Conqueror's March to London.
   1. Submission of Kent and London.
   2. Resistance of the Saxon clergy.
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III. The Coronation of the Conqueror.
   1. Action of Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury.
   2. Eldred, Archbishop of York, consents to perform the ceremony of coronation.
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IV. Archbishop Eldred.
   1. Storm of York.
   2. Interview between Eldred and William the Conqueror.

V. The Saxons and Normans.
   1. The union of the two races.
   2. The Saxon language revolutionized.

VI. The Bayeux Tapestry—its Historical Value.

VII. William's Death.
   1. Scene at the burial.
   2. Person and character of the Conqueror.

SPEECHES BEFORE THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

HAROLD'S SPEECH.

See, valiant war-friends, yonder be the first, the last, and all
The agents of our enemies; they henceforth cannot call
Supplies; for weeds at Normandy by this in porches grow:
Then conquer these would conquer you, and dread no further foe.
They are no stouter than the Brutes, whom we did hence exile:
Nor stronger than the sturdy Danes, our victory ere while:
Nor Saxony could once contain, or scarce the world beside
Our fathers, who did sway by sword where listed them to bide:
Then do not ye degenerate; take courage by descent,
And by their burials, not abode, their source and flight prevent.
Ye have in hand your country's cause, a conquest they pretend,
Which (were ye not the same ye be) even cowards would defend.
I grant that part of us ere fled, and linked to the foe,
And glad I am our army is of traitors cleared—so:
Yea, pardon hath he to depart, that stayeth malcontent;
I prize the mind above the man, like zeal hath like event.
Yet truth it is, no well or ill this Island ever had,
But through the well or ill support of subjects good or bad;
Not Cæsar, Hengist, Sweyn, or now (which ne'ertheless shall fail)
The Norman Bastard, Albion true, did, could, or can prevail.
But to be self-false in this Isle a self-foe ever is,
Yet wot I, never traitor did his treason's stipend miss.

Shrink who will shrink, let armor's weight press down the burdened earth,
My foes with wond'ring eyes shall see I over-prize my death.
But since ye all (for all, I hope, alike affected be,
Your wives, your children, lives, and land, from servitude to free)
Are arméd both in show and zeal, then gloriously contend,
To win and wear the home-brought spoils, of Victory the end.
Let not the skinner's daughter's son possess what he pretends,
He lives to die a noble death that life for freedom spends.

DUKE WILLIAM'S SPEECH.

To live upon or lie within this is my ground or grave,
(My loving soldiers;) one of twain your Duke resolves to have.
Nor be ye Normans now to seek in what ye should be stout;
Ye come amidst the English pikes to hew your honors out;
Ye come to win the same by lance, that is your own by law;
Ye come, I say, in righteous war revenging swords to draw.
Howbeit of more hardy foes no passéd flight hath sped ye,
Since Rollo to your now-abode with bands victorious led ye,
Or Turchus, son of Troilus, in Scythian Fazo bred ye.
Then worthy your progenitors, ye seed of Priam's son,
Exploit this business, Rollons, do that which ye wish be done.
Three people have as many times got and forgone this shore;
It resteth now ye conquer it, not to be conquered more:
For Norman and the Saxon blood conjoining, as it may,
From that consorted seed the crown shall never pass away.
Before us are our arméd foes, behind us are the seas,
On either side the foe hath holds of succor and for ease:
But that advantage shall return their disadvantage thus,
If ye observe no shore is left the which may shelter us,
And so hold out amidst the rough whilst they hail in for lee,
Whereas, whilst men securely sail, not seldom shipwrecks be.
What should I cite your passed acts, or tediously incense
To present arms; your faces show your hearts conceive offense;
Yea, even your courage divines a conquest not to fail.
Hope then your Duke doth prophesy, and in that hope prevail.
A people brave, a terren Heaven, both objects worth your wars,
Shall be the prizes of your prow's, and mount your fame to stars.
Let not a traitor's perjured son exclude us from our right:
He dies to live a famous life, that doth for conquest fight.

—WARNER'S *Albion's England.*

I. THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

The night before the battle was spent by the Normans in prayer and confession of their sins. The Saxons left the duties of religion to the monks in their camp, and took their last leave of the world in drunken riot. Next day, October 14, the two armies were drawn up on two opposite hills, divided by a slight interval of low ground; the English, however, had the advantage of the higher slope. It was a battle of the old and new worlds. The English were still armed with the ax, as when they had conquered Britain six hundred years before; they had no archers, though they brought a few petronels into the field, and a part of their

force had no better arms than clubs and iron-pointed stakes. Their horsemen had dismounted, as the only object was to hold a position, and with the men in mail-armor in front they formed an impenetrable phalanx, which they could not break without disordering their ranks. Thus appointed, they clustered around their standard, the image of an armed warrior, and welcomed the Norman onset with shouts of "Holy Rood" and "Mighty God." The strength of the Norman army lay in its panoplied horsemen and its archers, but the soldiers generally, having swords and spears, were better armed than the English. Yet so perilous did the service appear, that two barons, De Couches and Giffart, declined to carry the consecrated banner. The army, however, marched up gayly to the charge, with Taillefer at their head, singing songs of Roland and Roncesvalles; while William appeared in the ranks with the relics on which Harold had sworn hung round his neck. For a time no impression could be made; the English ranks stood firm, and the Norman knights were hurled headlong down the hill, or driven into a blind fosse by its side. At one moment a panic ran through the host: it was rumored that the duke himself had been killed, and William only restored the battle by unbarring his vizor and staying the fugitives in person. But artillery and discipline produced their invariable results under competent generalship. The English phalanx was weakened by a storm of arrows so discharged as to fall perpendicularly on the combatants; and a series of feints drew the soldiers from their position; they had learned to fight, but had never been drilled to maneuver, and, unable to recover their ground, were cut to pieces in detail. Last of all, Harold and his peers were slain around their standard, and the papal banner floated in victory over English soil. Yet so obstinate had the struggle been that it had lasted from early morning till sunset; several thousand Normans paid the price of the victory with their blood, and the English, while retreating through the wood at their rear, beat back their pursuers so fiercely that the fortune of the day was again in jeopardy, till William brought up reinforcements. But the fate of the kingdom had been decided by the death of Harold and all the nobles of the south. It is said that William had forbidden quarter to be given; probably in so fierce a battle there was little thought of mercy on either side. But the Conqueror in his worst moments was always swayed more by policy than by passion. In the first flush of triumph he had ordered Harold's body to be buried like a felon's, under water-mark on the beach. In his calmer moments he punished the Norman soldier who had mutilated the corpse, and allowed Harold's mother to remove it to a tomb better fitting a king. A touching legend of a later age told that only Edith of the Swan-neck, whom Harold had loved and left, was able to point out the corpse of her royal lover, on which battle and outrage had done their worst. The people long refused to believe in his death. They said he had escaped from the field, and was expiating his sins as a monk at Chester.

Harold's character has been praised or attacked as his historians have been Saxon or Norman in their prejudices. It is not without greatness, but it is not great. His presence, by the admission of the Normans themselves, was kingly; his body, well shaped and powerful; he was bold in action, eloquent in counsel, free of jest, and pleasant in court. But he fell below the average morality of a country whose public policy was already branded as treacherous, and of times in which every man fought for his own hand. His reckless bravery, and the story of the love which Edith bore him, have invested him with a false halo of romance; but the men of his own time esteemed him rather for generalship and craft than for high feeling or honor. Professed a churchman and patriot, he enlarged his

estates by church plunder, and exposed England to a war single-handed with Europe, rather than give up the diadem for which he had plotted and sinned. It is a slight circumstance, but it marks the character of the man—self-confident, and disdainful of public opinion—that he treated the envoys who came to his camp with brutal insolence. The modern theory that excuses his acts by a lofty public spirit is refuted by the inconsistencies of his conduct: he offered Tostig, when Tostig was powerful, the earldom taken from him when he was weak; and he wavered the day before he died, whether he should not dismember England by treaty with the invader. By a singular retribution, his crimes were punished by the very men against whom he offended: Tostig, whom he tried to supplant, and William, to whom he had perjured himself, were the instruments of his ruin. It is the most terrible condemnation of the English people that the name of such a man as Harold should be indissolubly connected with the last days of their national life; it is Harold's best title with posterity that the Saxon monarchy was buried on the field where he fell.—PEARSON'S *History of England.*

II. THE CONQUEROR'S MARCH TO LONDON.

While the army of the king of the Anglo-Saxons and that of the invader were confronting each other, a fresh detachment of vessels from Normandy had crossed the channel to rejoin the great fleet stationed in the roads of Hastings. Their commanders landed, by mistake, several miles farther north, at a place called Rumen-ey, now Romney. The inhabitants of the coast received the Normans as enemies, and a battle took place, in which the foreigners were vanquished. William learned their defeat a few days after his victory, and, to spare a similar misfortune to the recruits that he still expected from across the strait, he resolved first of all to secure possession of the south-eastern coast. Instead, therefore, of advancing toward London, he marched back to Hastings, and remained there for some time, in order to try if his presence might not induce the people of the neighboring country to submit themselves voluntarily. But, receiving no peaceful advances, the conqueror resumed his march, with the remains of his army, and the fresh troops which had arrived in the interval from Normandy. He proceeded along the shore from south to north, devasting all in his course. At Romney he avenged the defeat of his soldiers by burning the houses and massacring the inhabitants. From Romney he marched toward Dover, the strongest place on the coast, of which he had formerly attempted to obtain peaceful possession by means of the oath which he extorted from Harold. The fortress of Dover, recently finished by the son of Godwin, under happier auspices, was situated on a rock which naturally rose precipitously from the sea that washed its base, and on which much pains and labor had been expended, in trimming it on all sides, so as to render it as smooth as a wall. The details of the siege by the Normans are not known; all that we learn from historians is, that the town of Dover was burned down, and that, influenced either by terror or treason, the garrison of the fortress surrendered it. William passed eight days at Dover, in constructing new walls and works of defense; then, changing his route, and discontinuing his course along the coast, he marched toward the metropolis.

The Norman army advanced by the great Roman way, called by the English Wetlinga-street, the same which had so often served as a common boundary in the divisions of territory between the Saxons and the Danes. This road led from Dover to London through the middle of the province of Kent; the conquerors

passed a portion of it without their passage being disputed; but in one place, where the road approached the Thames, on the border of a forest well adapted for an ambuscade, a large body of armed Saxons suddenly appeared. They were commanded by two priests, Egelsig, Abbot of the monastery of St. Augustine, at Canterbury, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Stigand, the same who had crowned King Harold. It is not exactly known what occurred in this encounter, whether there was a battle, followed by a treaty between the two armies, or whether the capitulation was concluded without fighting. It appears, however, that the army of Kent stipulated for all the inhabitants of that province, who engaged to offer no further resistance to the conquerors, on condition that they should remain as free after the conquest as they had been before it.

In thus treating for themselves, and separating their own fate from that of their country, the men of Kent (if indeed it be true that they entered into this compact) acted in a manner more hurtful to the common cause than advantageous to themselves; for no edict of the times gives any evidence that the foreigner kept faith with them, or distinguished them from the rest of the English in his oppressive measures and laws. Archbishop Stigand, either having joined in this capitulation, or vainly opposed it, (which is the most probable conjecture, considering his proud and intrepid character,) quitted the province which had laid down its arms, and repaired to London, where submission had not yet been thought of. The inhabitants of this great town, and the chiefs who were assembled there, had resolved to fight a second battle, which, well ordered and ably commanded, would be, to all appearance, more fortunate than the first.

But a supreme commander was needed, under whom all the troops and all volunteers might rally, and the national council, which ought to have named this commander, delayed making a decision, agitated as it was by divers intrigues and pretensions. Neither of the brothers of the late king, who were men capable of worthily filling his place, had survived the battle of Hastings. Harold had left two sons, who were still very young, and too little known to the people; it does not appear that they were then proposed as claimants to the throne. Among all the candidates the most powerful from their wealth and renown were Edwin and Morkar, brothers-in-law of Harold, the chiefs of Northumbria and Mercia. They had the suffrages of all the men of the north of England; but the citizens of London, the inhabitants of the south, and some others, set up in opposition to them young Edgar, the nephew of King Edward, who was surnamed Ætheling, or the illustrious, on account of his descent from several kings. This young man, feeble-minded, and without any acquired reputation, had been unable a year before to stand against the popularity of Harold; but he now outweighed that of the sons of Alfgar, and was supported against them by Stigand himself, and by Eldred, Archbishop of York.

Among the rest of the bishops there were several who were neither in favor of Edgar nor of his competitors, but demanded that submission should be made to him who had brought the Pope's bull and the consecrated standard. Some of these men were influenced by a sentiment of blind obedience to ecclesiastical power; others, by political cowardice; and others, of foreign origin, and bought beforehand by the foreign pretender, played the part for which they had been paid either in money or in promises. They did not, however, prevail; the majority of the great national council fixed their choice on a Saxon, but on the one least fit to command in these trying circumstances, the young nephew of Edward. He was proclaimed king after long hesitation, during which much precious time was

lost in useless disputes. His accession did not conduce to rally the unsettled spirits of the nation: Edwin and Morkar, who had engaged to put themselves at the head of the troops assembled in London, retracted their promise, and retired to their governments in the north, taking with them the soldiers of these countries, over whom they had entire influence. They vainly hoped to be able to defend the northern provinces distinct from the rest of England. Their departure weakened and discouraged those who remained in London with the new king; depression, the fruit of civil discord, succeeded the first ebullition of spirit and enthusiasm excited by the foreign invasion.

Meantime, the Norman troops were approaching at several points, and traversing in all directions the provinces of Surrey, Sussex, and Hants, plundering and burning the towns and hamlets, and massacring the men, whether armed or unarmed. Five hundred horse advanced as far as the southern suburb of London, came to an engagement with a body of Saxons who opposed them, and, in retreating, burned all the buildings on the right bank of the Thames. William, judging from this proof that the citizens had not yet renounced all intention of defending themselves, instead of approaching and laying siege to London, proceeded toward the west, and passed the Thames at the ford of Wallingford, in the province of Berks. He established an intrenched camp at this place, and left troops there to intercept any succors from the western provinces; then, directing his course toward the north-east, he himself encamped at Berkhamstead, in Hertfordshire, to cut off in the same manner all communication between London and the north, and to prevent the return of the sons of Alfgar, in case they should repent their inaction. By this maneuver the Saxon metropolis was hemmed in on all sides; numerous foraging parties ravaged the environs, and intercepted the supplies, without engaging in any decisive battle. More than once the Londoners gave battle to the Normans; but by degrees they were wearied out, and succumbed, not so much to the strength of the enemy, as to the fear of famine, and to the discouraging thought that they were cut off from all succor. King Edgar, the Archbishops Stigand and Eldred, Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester, several other priests, chiefs of high rank, and the principal citizens of the town, obeying necessity, says a contemporary Saxon Chronicle, repaired to the Norman camp, at Berkhamstead, and there tendered their submission to the misfortune of their country. They gave hostages to the foreigner, and took the oaths of peace and fidelity to him, and, in return, he promised to be kind and clement toward them. Then he marched to London, and, regardless of his promise, permitted everything in his course to be devasted.—THIERRY'S *History of the Norman Conquest.*

III. The Coronation of the Conqueror.

Upon the road from Berkhamstead to London there was a rich monastery called the Abbey of St. Alban, situated near the vast ruins of an ancient Roman municipal town. On approaching the estates of this convent William observed with surprise large trunks of trees, arranged so as to intercept his passage, or render it difficult. He had Frithric, the Abbot of St. Albans, brought before him. "Why," demanded the conqueror, "hast thou had thy timber felled in this manner?" "I have done my duty," replied the Saxon monk; "and if all those of my order had acted in the same way, as they might and should have done, perhaps thou would'st not have penetrated so far into our country." William did not go on to London, but, stopping some miles distant, he sent forward a strong

detachment of soldiers with orders to erect a fortress in the heart of the city, for his residence. While these works were rapidly proceeding, the Norman council of war were discussing, in the camp near London, the means of completing the conquest, so successfully commenced. The intimate friends of William said that, in order to render the inhabitants of the yet unsubdued provinces less stubborn in their resistance, it was desirable that, previous to any further invasion, the chief of the conquest should take the title of King of the English. This proposition was, undoubtedly, the most agreeable to the Duke of Normandy, but, always politic, he feigned indifference to it, and concealed his own wishes, for fear of appearing to his companions in fortune too ambitious of a dignity which would give him the pre-eminence over them, as well as over the conquered nation, and destroy the kind of military equality and brotherhood which in the camp put them on the same footing with their chief. William made modest excuses, and demanded at least some delay, saying that he had not come to England for the purpose of making his own fortune, but that of the whole Norman people; that, moreover, were it the will of God that he should be king, the time to take this title had not yet arrived, as too many provinces and too many men were still to be brought to submission.

The majority of the captains of the Norman race were disposed to take these hypocritical scruples literally, and to decide that in fact it was not yet time to elect a king, when a chief of the auxiliary bands, Aimery de Thouars, who had less cause to take umbrage at William's elevation than the natives of Normandy, addressed them with warmth, saying in the style of a flatterer and a mercenary soldier: "It is an excess of modesty to ask men-at-arms whether they desire that their lord should be king; soldiers are not expected to take part in discussions of this nature, and, moreover, our debates only serve to retard that which we all wish to see accomplished without delay." Those among the Normans who, after the feigned excuses of William, would have ventured to agree with him, quite changed their opinion when the Poictevin had spoken, for fear of appearing to be outdone by him in allegiance and devotion to the common chief. They therefore resolved unanimously that, previous to proceeding any further with the conquest, Duke William should be crowned King of England by the little number of Saxons whom he had succeeded in terrifying or corrupting.

Christmas day, then approaching, was fixed on for the ceremony. Stigand, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had taken the oath of peace to the conqueror in his camp at Berkhamstead, was invited to come and impose hands on, and crown him, according to ancient custom, in the church of the monastery of the West, in English *West-mynster*, near London. Stigand refused to go and consecrate a man stained with human blood, and an invader of the right of another. But Eldred, Archbishop of York, more circumspect and prudent, say the ancient historians, recognizing the necessity of conforming to the times, and not acting contrary to the decrees of God, by whom the powers of the earth are exalted, consented to perform this office for the formidable foreigner. The West Minster was prepared and decorated as in the ancient days, when, in accordance with the free votes of the principal men of England, the king of their choice presented himself there, to receive the investiture of the power which they had committed to him. But this preliminary election, without which the title of king was nothing beyond a vain mockery, and a bitter insult from the stronger party, did not take place in the case of the Norman chief. He left his camp of foreigners, and marched through double rows formed by them, as far as the monastery, where he was received by some Saxons, who were overcome with terror, or, at most, affected a steady and

unconstrained demeanor in their cowardly and servile office. At some distance, all the avenues leading to the church, the public places, and the streets of the suburb were filled with armed cavaliers, who, according to the ancient narratives, were to keep down the rebels, and guard the safety of those whose offices required them to be in the interior of the minster; two hundred and sixty chiefs of the army, the staff of the conqueror, entered with their duke.

The ceremony commenced by Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances, asking the Normans in the French language if they all desired that their general should take the title of King of the English; at the same time the Archbishop of York inquired of the English, in the Saxon tongue, if they would have the Norman for their king. On this, such vehement acclamations were raised in the church that they resounded beyond the gates, and reached the ears of the cavaliers who filled the neighboring streets. They mistook this confused noise for a cry of alarm, and, in obedience to their secret orders, immediately set fire to the houses. Several rushed toward the church, and at the sight of their drawn swords, and the flames of the conflagration, all the attendants, Normans as well as Saxons, dispersed. The latter hastened to extinguish the fire, the former to plunder during the trouble and disorder. The ceremony was interrupted by this unexpected tumult, and there only remained hastily to complete it the duke, Archbishop Eldred, and some priests of both nations. Trembling, they received from him whom they called king, and who, according to an ancient narrative, himself trembled as much as they, the oath to treat the Anglo-Saxon people as well as the best of the kings whom they had ever elected.

That very day the town of London had reason to know the worth of such an oath from the mouth of a foreign conqueror; an enormous war-tribute was imposed on the citizens, and their hostages were imprisoned. William himself, who could not in his heart believe that the benediction of Eldred and the acclamations of a few cowards could suffice to make him a king of England, in the legal sense of the word, puzzled to find a suitable style to adopt in his manifestoes, sometimes falsely entitled himself, King by hereditary succession, and at others, with great justice, King by the edge of the sword. But if he was doubtful about his formulas, he had no hesitation in his acts, and took his proper place by the attitude of hostility and defiance that he maintained toward the people. He did not yet venture into London, in spite of his garrison and the fortified intrenchments which they had hastily constructed for him. He left the city, to wait in the neighboring country until his engineers should have given more solidity to these works, and have laid the foundation of two other fortresses, to repress, says a Norman writer, the changeable spirit of a too numerous and fierce population.—THEIRRY'S *History of the Norman Conquest.*

IV. ARCHBISHOP ELDRED.

Leaving Lincoln, which by a kind of French euphony, they called *Nicole*, the invading army marched upon York, and, at a place where the streams whose junction forms the great river Humber approach each other, they encountered the confederated army of the Anglo-Saxons and the Welsh. There, as at the battle of Hastings, by their superiority in numbers and in armor they drove the enemy from their position, which they vainly endeavored to defend foot by foot. A great number of the English perished, the rest sought an asylum within the walls of York; but the conquerors, closely pursuing them, made a breach in the

walls, and entered into the town, massacring all, say the chronicles, from infants to old men. The remains of the patriotic army, or (to use the language of the Norman historians) the army of the rebels and brigands, descended the river Humber in boats; they then proceeded north, toward the country of the Scotch, or toward the English territories on the borders of Scotland. This became the rallying point for those who had been vanquished at York. "Thither," says an old chronicler, "the noble chiefs, Edwin and Morkar, retired, as well as other men of great distinction, bishops, clerks, men of all conditions, saddened by seeing their cause the weakest, but not resigning themselves to slavery."

The conquerors built a citadel in the center of the town of York, which thus became a Norman stronghold, and the bulwark of the conquest in the north. Its towers, filled with five hundred men in full armor, attended by several thousand esquires, and servants-at-arms, menaced the country of the Northumbrians. However, the invasion was not then carried into that country, and it is even doubtful if the province of York was ever wholly occupied, from the ocean to the mountains. The capital, subdued before its territory, was the advanced post of the Normans, and a post still perilous; they worked day and night in tracing their lines of defense; they forced the poor Saxons who had escaped the massacre to dig trenches, and repair for their enemies the ruins which their enemies had made. Fearful of being besieged in their turn, they collected food and provisions from all parts, and heaped them up in their dungeons. At this time the Archbishop of York, Eldred, he who had officiated at the consecration of the foreign king, entered his metropolis to celebrate some religious solemnity. On his arrival he sent to his estates, situated at a short distance from York, for supplies for his own use; and his servants, bringing horses and wagons, laden with corn and other provisions, chanced to meet at one of the gates the viscount, or Norman governor of the town, surrounded by a long escort. "Who are you," demanded the Norman, "and to whom are you taking these supplies?" "We are the servants of the Archbishop," they replied, "and these things are for the use of his house." The viscount, caring little for the archbishop and his household, signed to the men-at-arms who formed his escort to convey the horses and wagons to the citadel of York, and to stow away the provisions in the Norman magazines.

When the pontiff, the friend of the Conqueror, felt himself touched by the conquest, there arose in the depth of his soul an indignation hitherto unknown to his calm and prudent character. Eldred started off immediately to the Conqueror's quarters, and appeared before him in his pontifical robes, and holding his pastoral staff; William rose to offer him, according to the custom of the times, the kiss of peace; but the Saxon prelate drew back, and said: "Listen to me, King William: thou wast a foreigner, and nevertheless, it being God's will that our nation should be chastised, thou didst obtain, at the cost of much bloodshed, the kingdom of England; I anointed thee king; I crowned and blessed thee with mine own hands; but now I curse thee, thee and thy race; for thou hast merited it, having become the persecutor of the Church of God, and the oppressor of his ministers."

The Norman king listened unmoved to the impotent malediction of the old priest; he even restrained the indignation of his flatterers, who, trembling with rage, and half-unsheathing their swords, desired to revenge the insolence of the Saxon. He permitted Eldred to return to his Church at York in peace and safety; but this adventure left in the heart of the archbishop a feeling of deep sorrow, and perhaps of remorse for having contributed to the establishment of the foreign dominion. His dreams of ambition thus dispelled by actual experience, the melan-

choly conviction that he was neither exempt from the insults of the foreigner, nor from the general slavery, threw him into a slow malady, which by degrees wasted his strength. The following year, when the Saxons, having rallied anew, advanced to attack the town of York, Eldred's melancholy was redoubled, and, as if he feared death less than the presence of those men who still remained faithful to their country, he prayed to God, say the chronicles, to take him from this world, that he might not be a witness of the total ruin of his country and the destruction of his Church.—THIERRY'S *History of the Norman Conquest.*

V. The Saxons and Normans.

The Norman conquerors of England were rapidly absorbed by the conquered people: and the union of the two races took place at a period much earlier than has generally been stated by our historians. Though beaten in the field, after a long and stern struggle for their independence, and though perhaps decimated by seven dreadful years of war and carnage, the Saxons remained incomparably more numerous than their invaders, and it was considered an easier and a wiser task to conciliate them than to exterminate them. From his first coming into England, and, indeed, before his arrival, William the Conqueror had a strong party among the Saxon and Dano-Saxon thanes; this party rejoiced at his coming, and grew in numbers and strength after the battle of Hastings. To keep it steady to his interests William at a very early period began to give these great thanes Norman wives. Several of these brides were of the highest rank. Thus the Conqueror gave his own niece, Judith, in marriage to the great Saxon earl, Waltheof, whose warlike qualities and great popularity with the Saxon people might have made him formidable as an enemy many years after the catastrophe at Hastings. William even promised one of his own daughters to Edwin, Earl of Mercia, brother-in-law to the late King Harold; and it appears that this marriage would have taken place if suspicions had not been excited by the conduct of Edwin, who soon after fled from the Conqueror's court to put himself at the head of a formidable insurrection in the north country. Other young maidens from beyond sea, sisters or daughters to some of the noblest of the Conqueror's followers, were affianced to the sons of rich Saxons who had hoped to preserve their wealth by remaining quiet. But the more frequent inter-marriages among the chiefs of the two nations were those in which Norman barons and knights espoused Saxon heiresses. The fathers and brothers of many noble thanes, and of many great holders of land, perished in battle, either at Hastings or in the course of the seven years' war which followed that event; and by the ordinary dispositions of nature there was many a rich Saxon family that had daughters and no sons. By right of his feudal supremacy and kingly prerogative, William became guardian to all these Saxon orphans, and disposed of their lands and fortunes as he chose; and over such heiresses as were not orphans he could exercise a control through their peace-seeking fathers. It was better to please the Saxon people by marrying these heiresses to his barons and knights than to keep up a constant exasperation by forcibly seizing and giving away their estates; and it would appear, in spite of the frequent bravadoes about the rights of conquest, that the Norman chiefs considered the best rights to such estates, or the title least likely to be questioned, to be the hands of the Saxon heiresses whose ancestors had held them for ages. It is mentioned by several of the chroniclers, who were either contemporary or lived near the time, that many of the Norman and foreign adventurers who made part of William's first

army of invasion made no other bargain with him than that they should be married to Saxon heiresses, or to other rich young women in England. These chroniclers could not be expected to record all the marriages which took place between the two races, (such a piece of family history would throw great light upon an important part of our national history,) but they mention cases enough to prove the frequency of such alliances, and they speak of them as a fixed principle in the Conqueror's polity. In one generation the children proceeding from these marriages were numerous, and in these children the distinction between Norman and Saxon was already lost. But other and far more numerous intermarriages took place among those classes that were too poor or obscure to attract the notice of King William's historians. The home marriage-market was thinned by the long wars in the south and the north, the east and the west. The young Saxon women were fair and florid, and the young soldiers and camp-followers that came from Normandy and other parts of France seldom, if ever, brought wives with them: the circumstances and natural feelings of these parties would be decisive of the matter; but, no doubt, it would enter into the policy of the Conqueror to keep these young soldiers (many of whom were not his own subjects) in England, and in his own service, by encouraging and promoting their marriages with the unprovided Saxon maidens. Although not specifically mentioned by the monkish writers, the only annalists of those times, we can glean incidentally that these matches became very common shortly after the battle of Hastings, that they continued throughout the long war, and that they became still more frequent when the Conqueror crushed the last great insurrection in the country north of Trent, and finally subdued the Saxon spirit of independence. And these marriages among the commonalty contributed more than any other single cause to the disarming of mutual animosities, and to the tranquilizing of the kingdom.

William of Poictiers, the Conqueror's chaplain and chronicler, who is believed to have accompanied his hero and patron on his expedition to England, speaks with something like rapture of the beauty of countenance, the fair complexion, and long flowing hair of the Saxons. There is, however, no good reason to doubt the long-established opinion, that, physically as well as morally, the fusion of new brisk blood in the great but somewhat sluggish Anglo-Saxon stream was highly advantageous. If the Northmen, or Normans, had achieved the conquest of England on their first starting from Norway and the other shores of the North Sea, they would have differed very little in race or breed from the Saxons and Danes; but during the century and a half or more that these Scandinavian followers of Rollo had been settled in the north-west of France, or in those regions to which they imparted the name of Normandy, they had been greatly intermixed with Frankish, and Celtic, and other blood; their princes and chiefs had intermarried with royal or noble Franks, their followers with the common people of the country or of the States adjacent to it. Hence black hair and black eyes, and hands and feet of comparatively small size, were common among the real Normans who first came to England with the Conqueror, and long before that event the Normans had entirely lost their original Scandinavian language, and spoke nothing but a dialect of the French, as afterward in England the mixed race lost the use of the French language, and spoke nothing but English. If it took a longer time in England than it had taken in France to identify the language of the conquerors with the conquered, and if a good deal of the French dialect the Normans brought with them into England was fused and mixed with the staple of the growing English language, it was certainly not owing to the slow mixture

of the two races, but to other powerful causes, such as the close and long-continued connection between England and Normandy and the adjacent countries, the infant and transition state of our language at the time of the Conquest, the somewhat more advanced state of language and civilization in France, the great influx of foreign churchmen, and the tendency of the Latin (the language of the Church) to promote the use of words that sprung from Latin roots, and that were taken from dialects which were but derivatives of the Latin. When Rollo obtained an undisturbed possession of his Duchy of Normandy he retained no dominion elsewhere, and he appears to have given up almost immediately every connection with the country from which he had come; but the Conqueror and his descendants retained possession of Normandy and of other French-speaking States for more than one hundred and sixty years; and during all this period our kings were frequently on the Continent for long periods at a time, and many of our barons held fiefs in Normandy, Maine, and Anjou, as well as in England, and passed a portion of their time in their castles abroad. Even after this period, or when King John and Henry III. had lost nearly every foot of territory in France, there was an intimate connection between the two people on the opposite sides of the channel, and the conquests contemplated by Edward I. and achieved by Edward III. contributed to keep alive the use of the French language in England, and to engraft so much of it upon the Anglo-Saxon stock.

But besides the real Normans, or the men of mixed race, who came over with the Conqueror, there were numerous adventurers from other parts of the Continent, that came with the first expedition, or repaired to his standard afterward; for during the seven years' war he was frequently hard pressed by the Saxons, and compelled to bring over numerous bodies of recruits. In the first expedition there were men that came from Maine and Anjou, from Poictou and Bretagne, from central France and from southern France, from Burgundy and from Aquitaine; and to these were added volunteers and soldiers of fortune from the great plains of Italy at the foot of the Alps. All this enlarged and varied—and no doubt advantageously—the new blood which was mixed with the Anglo-Saxon. Of these more southern adventurers, many who had brought little else with them than a suit of chain armor, a lance, and a few hungry and bold followers, attained to high rank and command, married Saxon women, and became the founders of noble families.—*From the Penny Magazine.*

VI. The Bayeux Tapestry.

The most extrordinary memorial of that eventful period of transition, which saw the descendants of the old Saxon conquerors of Britain swept from their power and their possessions, and their places usurped by a swarm of adventurers from the shores of Normandy, is a work not of stone or brass, not of writing and illumination more durable than stone or brass, but a roll of needlework, which records the principal events which preceded and accompanied the Conquest with a minuteness and fidelity which leave no reasonable doubt of its being a contemporary production. This is the celebrated Bayeux Tapestry. When Napoleon contemplated the invasion of England, in 1803, he caused this invaluable record to be removed from Bayeux, and to be exhibited in the National Museum at Paris; and then the French players, always ready to seize upon a popular subject, produced a little drama in which they exhibited Matilda, the wife of the Conqueror, sitting in her lonely tower in Normandy, while her husband was fighting in England, and

thus recording, with the aid of her needlewomen, the mighty acts of her hero, portrayed to the life in this immortal worsted-work. But there is a more affecting theory of the accomplishment of this labor than that told in the French vaudeville. The women of England were celebrated all over Europe for their work in embroidery; and when the husband of Matilda ascended the throne of England, it is reasonably concluded that the skillful daughters of the land were retained around the person of the queen. They were thus employed to celebrate their own calamities. But there was nothing in this tapestry which told a tale of degradation. There is no delineation of cowardly flight or abject submission. The colors of the threads might have been dimmed with the tears of the workers, but they would not have had the deep pain of believing that their homes were not gallantly defended. In this great invasion and conquest, as an old historian has poetically said, "was tried by the great assize of God's judgment in battle the right of power between the English and Norman nations—a battle the most memorable of all others; and, however miserably lost, yet most nobly fought on the part of England." There was nothing in this tapestry to encourage another invasion eight centuries later. In one of the compartments of the tapestry were represented men gazing at a meteor or comet, which was held to presage the defeat of the Saxon Harold. A meteor had appeared in the south of France at the time of the exhibition of the tapestry in 1803, and the mountebank Napoleon proclaimed that the circumstances were identical. The tapestry, having served its purpose of popular delusion, was returned to its original obscurity. It had previously been known to Lancelot and Montfaucon, French antiquaries; and Dr. Ducarel, in 1767, printed a description of it, in which he stated that it was annually hung up round the nave of the church of Bayeux on St. John's day. During the last thirty years this ancient work has been fully described, and its date and origin discussed. Above all, the Society of Antiquaries rendered a most valuable service to the world by causing a complete set of colored *fac-simile* drawings to be made by an accomplished artist, Mr. Charles Stothard, which have since been published in the "Vetusta Monumenta."

In the Hotel of the Prefecture at Bayeux is now preserved this famous tapestry. In 1814 so little was known of it in the town where it had remained for so many centuries that Mr. Hudson Gurney was coming away without discovering it, not being aware that it went by the name of the "Toile de St. Jean." It was coiled round a windlass; and, drawing it out at leisure over a table, he found that it consisted of "a very long piece of brownish linen cloth, worked with woolen thread of different colors, which are as bright and distinct, and the letters of the superscriptions as legible, as if of yesterday." The roll is twenty inches broad, and two hundred and fourteen feet in length. Mr. Gurney has some sensible remarks upon the internal evidence of the work being contemporaneous with the Conquest. In the buildings portrayed there is not the trace of a pointed arch; there is not an indication of armorial bearings, properly so called, which would certainly have been given to the fighting knights had the needlework belonged to a later age; and the Norman banner is invariably *Argent*, a cross *Or* in a border *Azure*, and not the later invention of the Norman leopards. Mr. Gurney adds, "It may be remarked, that the whole is worked with a strong outline; that the clearness and relief are given to it by the variety of the colors." The likenesses of individuals are preserved throughout. The Saxons invariably wear moustaches; and William, from his erect figure and manner, could be recognized were there no superscriptions. Mr. Charles Stothard, who made the drawings of

the tapestry which have been engraved by the Society of Antiquaries, communicates some interesting particulars in a letter written in 1819. He adds to Mr. Gurney's account of its character as a work of art, that "there is no attempt at light and shade, or perspective, the want of which is substituted by the use of different colored worsteds. We observe this in the off-legs of the horses, which are distinguished alone from the near-legs by being of different colors. The horses, the hair, and mustaches, as well as the eyes and features of the characters, are depicted with all the various colors of green, blue, red, etc., according to the taste or caprice of the artist. This may be easily acccounted for when we consider how few colors composed their materials."

The first of the seventy-two compartments into which the roll of needlework is divided is inscribed "Edwardus Rex." The crowned king, seated on a chair of state, with a scepter, is giving audience to two persons in attendance; and this is held to represent Harold departing for Normandy. The second shows Harold and his attendants, with hounds, on a journey. He bears the hawk on his hand, the distinguishing mark of nobility. The inscription purports that the figures represent Harold, Duke of the English, and his soldiers, journeying to Bosham. The third is inscribed "Ecclesia," and exhibits a Saxon church, with two bending figures about to enter. The fourth compartment represents Harold embarking; and the fifth shows him on his voyage. The sixth is his coming to anchor previous to disembarking on the coast of Normandy. The seventh and eighth compartments exhibit the seizure of Harold by the Count of Ponthieu. The ninth shows Harold remonstrating with Guy, the Count, upon his unjust seizure.

The compartments from ten to twenty-five, inclusive, exhibit various circumstances connected with the sojourn of Harold at the court of William. Mr. Stothard has justly observed, "That whoever designed this historical record was intimately acquainted with whatever was passing on the Norman side, is evidently proved by that minute attention to familiar and local circumstances evinced in introducing, solely in the Norman party, characters certainly not essential to the great events connected with the story of the work." The twenty-sixth compartment represents Harold swearing fidelity to William, with each hand on a shrine of relics. All the historians appear to be agreed that Harold did take an oath to William to support his claims to the crown of England, whatever might have been the circumstances under which that oath was extorted from him. The twenty-seventh compartment exhibits Harold's return to England, and the twenty-eighth shows him on his journey after landing. The twenty-ninth compartment has an inscription purporting that Harold comes to Edward the King. The thirtieth shows the funeral procession of the deceased Edward to Westminster Abbey, a hand out of heaven pointing to that building as a monument of his piety. The inscription says, "Here the body of Edward the King is borne to the church of St. Peter the Apostle." The thirty-first and thirty-second compartments exhibit the sickness and death of the Confessor. The thirty-third shows the crown offered to Harold. The thirty-fourth presents us Harold on the throne, with Stigant, the archbishop. Then comes the compartment representing the comet already mentioned; and that is followed by one showing William giving orders for the building of ships for the invasion of England. We have then compartments in which men are cutting down trees, building ships, dragging along vessels, and bearing arms and armor. The forty-third has an inscription, "Here they draw a car with wine and arms." After a compartment with William on horseback, we have the fleet on its voyage. The inscription to this recounts that he passes the sea with

a great fleet, and comes to Pevensey. Three other compartments show the disembarkation of horses, the hasty march of cavalry, and the seizure and slaughter of animals for the hungry invaders. The forty-ninth compartment bears the inscription, "This is Wadard." Who this personage on horseback, thus honored, could be, was a great puzzle, till the name was found in "Domesday-Book" as a holder of land in six English counties, under Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, the Conqueror's half-brother. This is one of the circumstances exhibiting the minute knowledge of the designers of this needlework. The fiftieth and fifty-first compartments present us the cooking and feasting of the Norman army. We have then the dining of the chiefs; the Duke about to dine, while Odo blesses the food; and the Duke sitting under a canopy. The fifty-fifth shows him holding a banner, and giving orders for the construction of a camp at Hastings.

Six other compartments show us the burning of a house with firebrands, the march out of Hastings, the advance to the battle, and the anxious questioning by William of his spies and scouts as to the approach of the army of Harold. The sixty-third presents a messenger announcing to Harold that the army of William is near at hand. The sixty-fourth bears the inscription, that Duke William addresses his soldiers that they should prepare themselves boldly and skillfully for the battle. We have then six compartments, each exhibiting some scene of the terrible conflict. The seventy-first shows the death of Harold. The tapestry abruptly ends with the figures of flying soldiers.

We have probably been somewhat too minute in the description of this remarkable performance. If any apology be necessary, it may be best offered in the words of Mr. Amyot, in his "Defense of the Early Antiquity of the Bayeux Tapestry," which is almost conclusive as to the fact of it being executed under the direction of Matilda, the wife of the Conqueror, ("Archæologia," vol. xix:) "If the Bayeux Tapestry be not history of the first class, it is perhaps something better. It exhibits genuine traits, elsewhere sought in vain, of the costume and manners of that age which, of all others, if we except the period of the Reformation, ought to be the most interesting to us; that age which gave us a new race of monarchs, bringing with them new landholders, new laws, and almost a new language As in the magic pages of Froissart, we here behold our ancestors of each race in most of the occupations of life—in courts and camps—in pastime and in battle—at feasts, and on the bed of sickness. These are characteristics which of themselves would call forth a lively interest; but their value is greatly enhanced by their connection with one of the most important events in history, the main subject of the whole design."—CHARLES KNIGHT.

VII. DEATH AND BURIAL OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

The last earthly acts of the Conqueror were now done. He had striven to make his peace with God and man, and to make such provision as he could for the children and the subjects whom he left behind him. And now his last hour was come. On a Thursday morning in September, when the sun had already risen upon the earth, the sound of the great bell of the metropolitan minster struck on the ears of the dying king. He asked why it sounded. He was told that it rang for prime in the church of Our Lady. William lifted his eyes to heaven, he stretched forth his hands, and spake his last words: "To my Lady Mary, the holy Mother of God, I commend myself, that by her holy prayers she may reconcile me to her dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ." He prayed, and his

soul passed away. William, King of the English and Duke of the Normans, the man whose fame had filled the world in his own and in every following age, had gone the way of all flesh. No kingdom was left to him now but his seven feet of ground, and even to that his claim was not to be undisputed.

In the eastern limb of Saint Stephen's Minster, not yet the vaster and higher choir of later days, but the single stern apse of Cerisy or Saint Gabriel, a tomb, between the high altar and the choir, had been made ready to receive the Conqueror's body. The procession entered the church; the bier on which all that was left of William lay was borne along the nave, between the stern arches and massive pillars which he himself had reared. They reached the choir, then doubtless filling up the central space beneath the tower; the stone coffin was placed upon the ground, but the body still lay on the bier before the altar. The mass of the dead was sung, and the Bishop of Evreux mounted the pulpit to make the formal harangue over the Conqueror of England. He told the tale of William's greatness and William's conquests, how he had enlarged the bounds of the Norman duchy, and had raised his native land to a height of power and glory beyond all the deeds of his fathers who had gone before him. And he told also of those deeds of the departed Duke which entitled him to truer honor than to have made Maine and England subject to the Norman. He told how William had maintained honor and righteousness in the land, how his rod had smitten down thieves and robbers, how his sword had defended the clerk, the monk, and the unarmed people. He then called on all who heard him to pray for the soul of him whose body lay before them, he bade them crave the forgiveness of his sins at the hands of God, and themselves forgive any thing in which William might have sinned against them.

The appeal drew forth an answer. A knight, Ascelin, the son of Arthur, arose from the crowd, mounted on a stone, and spoke in the hearing of all: "This ground where ye stand was the site of my father's house, which the man for whom ye pray, while he was yet but Count of Normandy, took away by force from my father, and, in spite of law and justice, built this church upon it by his might. I therefore claim the land; I challenge it as mine before all men, and in the name of God I forbid that the body of the robber be covered with my mold, or that he be buried within the bounds of mine inheritance." He then came down, and wonder and tumult filled the church as men heard the daring challenge. The office paused; the bishops and nobles asked of the men of the neighborhood who stood by as to the truth of what Ascelin had told them. They bore witness that what he had said was true. Yet we should gladly hear what might have been said on William's side, as mere naked wrong, mere plunder, mere robbery for burnt-offering, is not in accordance with William's usual character. At such a moment the facts of the case would not be very accurately looked into. Men who had come together to make prayers and offerings for William's soul would be more ready to admit even a false charge against him than to leave any possible sin of his unatoned for. The Ætheling and the bishops called Ascelin to them; they spoke friendly to him, and made a bargain with him on the spot. Beneath the roof of St. Stephen's the covenant was made which first made its soil the lawful property of him who had founded the church and of those to whom he had granted it. With the assent of Henry, sixty shillings were at once given to Ascelin as the purchase-money of the seven feet of ground which were to be William's own. The full price of the whole estate which he had lost was promised to him, a promise which was soon after faithfully fulfilled. Ascelin then withdrew his

protest; William might now be buried in the ground which had lawfully become his own, and the funeral rites went on.

A posthumous atonement was thus made for one of the sins which weighed down William's soul; but one misfortune more was still in store for his body. The royal corpse had now to be moved from the bier to the stone coffin which was to be its last resting-place. But by the unskillfulness of the workmen the coffin had been made too small to receive the unwieldy carcass of William. In the efforts which were made to force it into its narrow room the body burst; a fearful stench filled the church, which the burning of incense and of all sweet savors could not overcome. The remainder of the office was hurried over; the officiating clergy went back with all speed to their own quarters, and the course of William on earth was brought to an end. He had gone to his grave amid scenes as stormy and as wonderful as aught that had marked his course from the day when he grasped the straw upon the floor at Falaise to the day when he received his death-wound in the burning streets of Mantes.—FREEMAN'S *Norman Conquest.*

VIII. The Abiding Character of William's Work.

By this time we have learned the true nature of the great work of William both in Normandy and in England, and we have traced out his life and rule in both lands from his cradle at Falaise to his grave at Caen. But it is eminently characteristic of William that the history of his deeds does not end with the history of his own life, but that, in a sense almost peculiar to himself, his work lived after him. Other conquerors, conquerors, many of them, on a wider field than William, have affected the course of all later history in a way that neither Norman nor English vanity can venture to maintain that William has done. He cannot, in a view of universal history, claim to have left his impress on all time like Alexander, Cæsar, Constantine, and Charles. His work, after all, was bounded by a single island and a small portion of the neighboring mainland. But, within that comparatively narrow range William wrought a work which, in one sense indeed, has been far more abiding than theirs. Of each of those lords of the world we may say that the influence of his work has been eternal, but that his work itself has fallen in pieces. But within William's island world, in the empire where he could be at once king and Cæsar, not only has the influence of his work been eternal, but his work itself still abides. His work has been more lasting, because it has been in some sort less brilliant. Almost alone among conquerors, he conquered, neither to destroy nor to found, but to continue. The monarchy of England, in the shape which it has taken ever since William's day, has been William's work. But it has been his work, it has received from him a new life and a lasting character, because he was content, not to wipe out, but carefully to preserve, the old laws and constitution, the very titles and formulæ, of the realm which he claimed as his lawful heritage. The legal fictions of Domesday, the formula of the *antecessor*, the calm assumption of Eadward as the immediate *antecessor* of William, bear witness to something more than the spirit in which the actual details of the conquest were carried out. They set forth in truth the great lesson of the continuity of English history; they teach us, as if from the mouth of William himself, that it is not with the coming of William that the history or the law of England began. But they set forth too the harder lesson, the paradox as it may seem, that it is mainly owing to the coming of William that we owe our unbroken connection with Ælfred, Ecgberht, and Cerdic. It is owing to the momentary overthrow,

to the seeming momentary destruction, of our old kingship, our old freedom, our old national being, that we have been able, more truly than any other European nation, to keep them all as an unbroken possession for eight centuries after they had seemed to perish. Strange as it may seem, the Norman Conquest has, in its results, been the best preserver of the older life of England. When we compare our history with that of nations which never underwent the like foreign conquest, with our kinsfolk in Germany and Scandinavia, we see that, through that very foreign conquest, we have been enabled to keep on a political being far more unbroken than they have. We have not had, like Germany, to reconstruct our national being, after being split in pieces for ages. We have not had, like the Scandinavian kingdoms, to set up our freedom again as something new, or at least restored, after a longer or shorter interval of acknowledged despotism. . . . In one point alone can I see that the coming of the Norman has done us lasting harm. One direct, though not immediate, result of the Norman Conquest, which Germany and Scandinavia have escaped, has been the lasting corruption on English lips of the common mother-tongue.—FREEMAN'S *Norman Conquest.*

II. From William II. to Henry II.

GUIDE ANALYSIS.

I. REIGN OF WILLIAM RUFUS.
1. Desire of the Norman barons to unite England and Normandy under the sovereignty of Robert, Duke of Normandy.
2. William the Red chosen King.
3. Quarrels between the King and Robert.
4. Struggle between the King and the Church.
5. Death of Lanfranc.
6. William's quarrel with Archbishop Anselm.
7. William's continued exactions.
8. Death of William Rufus. His character.

II. REIGN OF HENRY I.
1. Henry's advantages over his brother Robert. His various measures.
2. Charter of Henry I.
3. Henry marries an English wife.
4. Henry I. and Anselm.
5. Duke Robert invades England.
6. War with France. Henry and the barons.
7. Henry and the people.
8. Character of Henry I.
9. Government of Henry I. The justiciar. The chancellor. The treasurer. The great Council. The exchequer. The king's revenue. The Curia Regis. The country courts.
10. Character of the Norman rule.
11. Prince William shipwrecked and drowned.
12. Henry's efforts to secure the succession of his daughter Matilda to the throne.

III. REIGN OF STEPHEN OF BLOIS.
1. Claims of Matilda to the throne.
2. Measures pursued by Stephen to secure the crown.
3. Anarchy of Stephen's reign.
4. His quarrel with the Church.
5. Civil war.
6. Treaty made by which Henry of Anjou was acknowledged as Stephen's successor.
7. Death of Stephen and accession of Henry II.
8. England became one under the Angevin kings.

IV. NO NORMANS.

I. REIGN OF WILLIAM RUFUS. A.D. 1087 TO A.D. 1100.

ON his death-bed William the Conqueror nominated his son Robert to the Duchy of Normandy, but did not appoint any of his sons to the throne of England, for the English had the right of choosing their own king. At the same time he gave some

private counsel to William, his second son; and we may judge from the measures pursued by William to secure the crown what that counsel must have been.

The barons, both in England and Normandy, would have liked to have for their king, Robert, the Conqueror's eldest son. But William the Red, as the second son was called from the color of his hair, had a powerful friend in Lanfranc. William was ready to do any thing to get the crown; and as the barons were against him he threw himself upon the support of the English. He swore to Lanfranc that he would rule with justice and mercy, would care for the Church, and follow his advice in all things. So Lanfranc crowned him king, and his promises of good government bound the English people to him.

The barons still clung to Robert, and it took much fighting, both in England and Normandy, to put them down. Many of the great Norman barons in England lost their lands and liberty by rebellion. At last, like so many other men of his day, Robert grew eager to go to the East on the Crusade, and fight to win back Christ's sepulcher from the Saracens. He made peace with William, and left him his duchy during his absence in return for a large sum of money. William the Red was, like his father, a strong man, who knew how to make himself obeyed; but he had not his father's virtues. As long as Lanfranc lived he kept him in order, so that his vices did not show themselves. But, to the great loss of the country, Lanfranc died less than two years after the Red King came to the throne. Then William showed himself in his true light—a man who feared neither God nor men, who gave way to all his passions, and openly scoffed at religion and virtue.

For his chief minister and adviser he chose Ranulf Flambard, a priest, an able and crafty man, who cared no more for virtue than the king himself. He used every means to get money for the king, who loved it as much as his father had done, and cared not how he got it. "In his days," says the chronicler, "all justice sunk, and all unrighteousness arose." When an abbot or a bishop died, the king and his minister did not choose one to fill his place, but drew all the rents for themselves, and took all the money that belonged to the office.

After Lanfranc's death nearly four years passed, and no new archbishop was named, till all men murmured. Even the rough barons at William's court asked him to fill the see. But he would not, till, falling very sick, he feared to die, and the thought of his many sins came to frighten him.

It chanced that at that time there was a holy man in the land, abbot of that same monastery of Bec from which Lanfranc had come, Anselm by name. He had been a friend of Lanfranc's, and was, like him, an Italian and a learned man. He had long been spoken of as the man who should be archbishop. So in his sickness the frightened king sent for him, and told him that it was his will that he should fill the see of Canterbury. But Anselm had no wish for this honor. He was a simple monk, he said, and wished to live in peace—he had never mixed with the business of the world. The bystanders had to use force before they could make him take the cross in his hands, and it was against his will that he was made archbishop.

When the king got better of his sickness he forgot his vows to lead a new life, and behaved worse than before. But in Anselm he found a man bold enough to rebuke his crimes. When all the land trembled before the tyrant, the archbishop spoke out for the cause of liberty and good government. That the two should

live in peace side by side was impossible. The king grew to hate Anselm, and quarreled with him because he rebuked him for his vices, and because he would not give him the money he wanted. Moreover, there were at that time two Popes in Christendom, each claiming to be the rightful one. Anselm had said that he would obey Urban II. as Pope, but William forbade him to look upon either as Pope till he allowed it.

At last William grew so bitter against him that Anselm had to leave the country and go to Rome, where he stayed till the Red King's death. For twelve long years of misery William ruled over the land. The barons imitated his vices, and on all sides the people were oppressed. Ranulf Flambard found out ever-new ways of burdening the country with taxes. Law was almost silent, and only money weighed with the judges.

William loved hunting as much as his father had done, and his forest laws were very cruel. One day, while hunting in the New Forest, he was shot by an arrow and killed on the spot. Whether this was done by chance or on purpose was never known, and perhaps no man cared to ask, from joy that the tyrant was dead.—Louise Creighton, *England a Continental Power.*

DEATH OF THE RED KING.

The Saxons, persecuted for transgressions against the laws of the chase even more vigorously by the Red King than by his father, had no other means of revenge than by calling him, in derision, the *keeper of the woods and of the deer*, and by spreading sinister reports about these forests, into which no man of the English race was allowed to enter, armed, under pain of death. They said that the devil, under all sorts of horrible forms, had there appeared to the Normans, and had told them of the dreadful fate that he had in reserve for the king and his counselors. This popular superstition was strengthened by the singular chance which rendered hunting in the forests of England, and above all in the New Forest, so fatal to the Conqueror's race. In the year 1081 Richard, the eldest son of William the Bastard, had there mortally wounded himself; in the month of May of the year 1100 Richard, the son of Duke Robert, and nephew of the Red King, was killed there by an arrow imprudently drawn; and, by a most curious coincidence, the king perished there also, in the same manner, in the month of July of the same year.

On the morning of the last day of his life he had a great feast with his friends in Winchester Castle, after which he prepared for the proposed chase. While he was going on his horse and joking with his guests, a workman presented him with six new arrows; he examined them, praised the workmanship, took four for himself, and gave the other two to Walter Tyrrel, saying, "Good marksmen should have good arms." Walter Tyrrel was a Frenchman, who had great possessions in the county of Poix and in Ponthieu; he was the king's most familiar friend and assiduous attendant. At the moment of starting there entered a monk from the convent of St. Peter, at Gloucester, who brought William dispatches from his abbot. This abbot, a Norman by birth, named Serlon, sent word to the king, in some anxiety, that one of his monks (probably of the English race) had had in his sleep a vision of bad omen; that he had seen Jesus Christ seated on a throne, and at his feet a woman supplicating him in these words: "Saviour of the human race, look down with pity on thy people groaning under the yoke of William." On hearing this message the king laughed loudly: "Do they take me for an Englishman," he said, "with their dreams? Do they fancy that I am one of those

fools who abandon their course and their business because an old woman dreams or sneezes? Come, Walter de Poix, to horse!"

Henry, the king's brother, William de Breteuil, and several other nobles, accompanied him to the forest; the hunters dispersed; but Walter Tyrrel remained beside him, and their dogs hunted together. They had taken up their station, opposite one another, each with his arrow in his cross-bow, and his finger on the trigger, when a large stag, tracked by the beaters, advanced between the king and his friend. William drew, but his bowstring breaking, the arrow did not fly, and the stag, confused by the noise, stood still, looking around him. The king signed to his companion to shoot, but the latter took no notice, either not seeing the stag, or not understanding the signs. William then impatiently cried aloud: "Shoot, Walter, shoot, in the devil's name!" And at the same instant an arrow, either that of Walter, or some other, struck him in the breast; he fell without uttering a word, and expired. Walter Tyrrel ran to him; but, finding he had ceased to breathe, he re-mounted his horse, galloped to the coast, crossed over to Normandy, and from thence to the French territory.

On the first rumor of the king's death all who attended the hunt left the forest in haste to see after their interest. His brother Henry made for Winchester and the royal treasure, and the corpse of William Rufus remained on the ground, abandoned like that of the Conqueror had been. Some charcoal-burners, who found it pierced by the arrow, put it on their cart, wrapped in old linen, through which the blood dropped all along the road. Thus were the remains of the second Norman king conveyed to Winchester, where Henry had already arrived, and imperiously demanded the keys of the royal treasure. While the keepers were hesitating, William de Breteuil arrived in breathless haste from the forest, to oppose this demand. "Thou and I," he said to Henry, "ought loyally to keep the faith that we promised to thy brother, Duke Robert; he has received our oath of homage; and, absent or present, he has the right." A violent quarrel ensued; Henry drew his sword, and soon, with the help of the assembled crowd, took possession of the royal treasure and the regalia.—THIERRY, *History of the Norman Conquest.*

CHARACTER OF RUFUS.

He was in stature somewhat below the usual size, and big-bellied; but he was well and strongly knit. His hair was yellow or sandy, his face red, which got him the name of Rufus, his forehead flat; his eyes were spotted and appeared of different colors; he was apt to stutter in speaking, especially when he was angry; he was vigorous and active and very hardy to endure fatigues, which he owed to a good constitution of health and the frequent exercise of hunting; in his dress he affected gaiety and expense, which, having been first introduced by this prince into his court and kingdom, grew in succeeding reigns an intolerable grievance. He also first brought in among us the luxury and profusion of great tables. There was in him as in all other men a mixture of virtues and vices and that in a pretty equal degree; only the misfortune was that the latter, although not more numerous, were yet much more prevalent than the former. For being entirely a man of pleasure, this made him sacrifice all his good qualities and gave him too many occasions of producing his ill ones. He had one very singular virtue for a prince, which was that of being true to his word and promise; he was of undoubted personal valor, whereof the writers in those ages produce several instances, nor did he want skill and conduct in the process of war. But his peculiar excellency was

that of great dispatch, which, however usually decried and allowed to be only a happy temerity, does often answer all the ends of secresy and counsel in a great commander by surprising and daunting an enemy when he least expects it, as may appear by the greatest actions and events upon the records of every nation.

He was a man of sound natural sense, as well as of wit and humor upon occasion. There were several tenets in the Romish Church he could not digest, particularly that of the saints' intercession, and, living in an age overrun with superstition, he went so far into the other extreme as to be censured for an atheist. The day before his death, a monk relating a terrible dream which seemed to forbode him some misfortune, the king being told the matter turned it into a jest; said the man was a monk, and dreamt like a monk for lucre sake; and therefore commanded Fitzhamon to give him one hundred shillings, that he might not complain he had dreamt to no purpose.

His vices appear to have been rather derived from the temper of his body than from any original depravity of mind, for, being of a sanguine complexion, wholly bent upon his pleasures and prodigal in his nature, he became engaged in great expenses. To supply these the people were perpetually oppressed with illegal taxes and exactions; but that sort of avarice which arises from prodigality and vice, as it is always needy, so it is much more ravenous and violent than the other, which put the king and his evil instruments (among whom Ralph, Bishop of Durham, is of special infamy) upon those pernicious methods of gratifying his extravagancies by all manner of oppression, whereof some are already mentioned, and others are too foul to relate.

He is generally taxed by writers for discovering a contempt of religion in his common discourse and behavior, which I take to have risen from the same fountain, being a point of art and a known expedient for men who cannot quit their immoralities, at least to banish all reflection that might disturb them in the enjoyment, which must be done either by not thinking of religion at all, or if it will intrude by putting it out of countenance.

Yet there is one instance that might show him to have some sense of religion as well as justice. When two monks were outvying each other in canting the price of an abbey, he observed a third at some distance who said never a word; the king demanded why he would not offer? The monk said he was poor, and besides would give nothing if he were ever so rich; the king replied, "Then you are the fittest person to have it," and immediately gave it him. But this is perhaps with reason enough assigned more to caprice than conscience, for he was under the power of every humor and passion that possessed him for the present, which made him obstinate in his resolves and unsteady in the prosecution.

He had one vice or folly that seemed rooted in his mind, and of all others most unbefitting a prince; this was a proud, disdainful manner, both in his words and gesture, and having already lost the love of his subjects by his avarice and oppression, this finished the work by bringing him into contempt and hatred among his servants, so that few among the worst of princes have had the luck to be so ill-beloved or so little lamented.—SWIFT.

II. REIGN OF HENRY I. (BEAUCLERC.) A.D. 1100 TO A.D. 1135.

During the imperial reigns of the first Norman kings, English customs and English rights were mocked at and swept away. The English clergy were thrust out to make room for Norman

ecclesiastics; English monks were removed from monasteries, and it is said that even the church niches were emptied of Saxon saints and filled again with saints of the Conqueror's own persuasion. The English people were compelled to give up their cultivated lands to Norman proprietors; and under the tyranny of William II. they were forced to labor on public works without remuneration for their toil. But upon the accession of Henry I., surnamed Beau Clerc, or fine scholar, much deference was paid to the conquered part of the nation. The gradual change in the relations of the Saxon and Norman races is shown by the marriage of Henry I. to a Saxon princess, a descendant of Alfred the Great. This lady, to use the words of the Saxon chronicle, was "Maud, daughter of Malcolm, King of Scots, and of Margaret, the good queen, the relation of King Edward, and of the right kingly kin of England." This union between the blood of the Conqueror and the blood of King Alfred led, soon afterward, to the restoration of the Saxon line in the person of Henry II. If we consider the changes that occurred in the reign of King Henry, we shall see that his policy had the effect of protecting the English people.

Henry, William's younger brother, was hunting with him when he was killed. Robert was still away on the Crusade, and Henry had himself chosen king by the few barons who were round William at his death.

But Henry knew well that the barons really wished Robert to be king, and so hastened to make himself sure of the people. At his crowning he swore to give the land peace, justice, and equity. Afterward he gave the people a charter in which he promised to free the Church from all unjust burdens, and the land from all evil customs; he gave back to the people their old laws, and promised to reform all the abuses which had crept in during the Red King's reign.

We must remember this charter, because it states very clearly for the first time the rights of the people. It puts bounds to the power of the king by saying that the freedom of the people cannot lawfully be interfered with. It gave the people good hope that their troubles were at an end.

Henry had been born in England, and the English people joyfully welcomed him as in truth an English king. Still greater was their joy when he took for his wife an English maiden, Edith, daughter of Malcolm, King of Scotland, and Margaret, the sister of Edgar the Atheling. She took the name of Maud on her marriage, and her virtues made her very dear to the English people, who spoke of her as the "good Queen Maud."

One of Henry's first acts was to send for Anselm to come back. The archbishop came full of hope that now he might do something to reform the Church and the monasteries. Henry was willing to reform the Church, but he meant to keep the old customs that had been in force in his father's reign. He wanted the bishops and abbots to do him homage and be his men, as the laymen were; he meant himself to fill up the vacant posts in the Church, and give the bishops and abbots the ring and the staff, the signs of their office. But Anselm had quite

other views. He said that the election of abbots and bishops belonged to the monks and chapters, that the clergy owed the king no homage, and that no layman could give the ring and the staff. On this point neither would give way, and so they quarreled. Henry had the strong will of his father, and would give up none of his powers. Anselm felt that he was fighting for the liberty of the Church. He had seen how she had suffered from being quite in the king's power in the last reign.

It was the same quarrel that was then troubling all Europe, and is called the dispute about *investitures*. The point was whether it was the lay power or the Church which had the right to *invest* or clothe a man in the dignities of a spiritual office.

We need not follow out the quarrel between Anselm and Henry, which lasted for many years. For three years Anselm was banished from England, because he would not give way to the king. At last they came to an agreement by each side giving way a little. The important thing about the quarrel is that the Church was able to make so hard a fight against such a strong king as Henry, and in the end really made him give up something. This showed him that he could not always do just as he willed, and it taught the people, too, that they were not so much at the king's mercy as it seemed.

Anselm did not live quite three years after his return from exile, but during that time Henry listened to him when he spoke of the sorrows of the poor, and something was done to help them. Anselm was known all over Christendom for his learning and his piety. Men mourned much for his death, and the Church made him one of her saints.

Henry I. was hardly crowned when Robert reached Normandy, on his return from the Crusade. He listened to the barons, who urged him to try and take the English crown from his brother. The barons saw that Henry's rule would be strict, while they knew that Robert, though a brave soldier, was weak and foolish. If they had Robert for their king, they hoped to be able to have things more their own way. In the whole quarrel the barons looked only for their own gain, and cared little for Robert; but the English held firmly by Henry. The fighting was mostly in Normandy, where at last Henry won the great battle of Tenchebrai (1106) and took Robert prisoner. Henry I. now ruled over both Normandy and England, and kept Robert in prison till his death.

Still he was not left undisturbed, for the King of France feared his power, and the barons were always discontented. Robert's son claimed Normandy, and the King of France fought for him; but he died young, and Henry had no other rival to fear. The wars in France really strengthened his power at home. He was able to seize the lands of those barons who rose against him, and in this way the descendants of most of the great men who had taken part in the Conquest lost their lands in England. Henry did not, as a rule, seize their lands in Normandy also. He was afraid that if he did so he would drive them to seek help from the King of France.

These struggles with the barons brought much good to the English people. Henry had to trust to their help, and, that he might be sure of it, he had to give them the good government which they wanted, and give them back the old laws and customs which they had had under Edward the Confessor. It is in this reign that we find the beginnings of English liberties. It was not that Henry loved his people; his aims were quite selfish. He wanted them to help him, and he was wise enough to take the right means to get them to do so. He began his

reign by arresting Ranulf Flambard, William the Red's wicked minister, and this seemed to the people to promise good government. He made friends with the Church by filling up all the sees which William had left empty, and, except for his quarrel with Anselm, worked with the Church to do away with the abuses in the land.

Henry was a hard, selfish man, but, fortunately for the people, his interests were the same as theirs. He knew what he wanted, and he knew how to get it. He kept his aims clearly before him in all that he did. He wished to build up a strong power out of the firm union with England and Normandy. Men did not love him, but they feared and trusted him, for they could see and understand his aims. "Great was the awe of him," says the chronicler; "no man durst ill-treat another in his time: he made peace for men and deer."

The Conqueror had loved order and made peace in the land. But time had tried his system and showed the points in which it failed, so that Henry could see where it would be well to make changes. In his plans for reform his chief adviser was Roger, Bishop of Salisbury. He was a very wise and able man, a Norman by birth, who had risen in Henry's service from being a poor clerk to be Bishop of Salisbury and chief minister to the king. In Henry I.'s time these ministers of the crown first grew up to help the king in all that he had to do.

The chief minister in those days was called the *Justiciar*. At first the justiciar only existed when the king was away from England, and some one had to take his place there. The Conqueror wanted no minister, for he liked to look after every thing himself. But as the business of the Government grew greater, some one was much oftener wanted to fill the king's place and look after things for him. Roger of Salisbury was justiciar to the end of Henry's reign, and it is in his time that the justiciar seems to have grown to be chief minister of the crown.

In later times the justiciar became only a judge—the lord chief-justice, as he is now called. Most of his duties then fell upon the *Chancellor*, who was at first only the head of the royal chaplains, the priests in the king's service. They were the king's secretaries. He got his name from the screen—*cancelli*, as it is called in Latin—behind which he and the chaplains did their work. The chancellor also has become in our days a legal officer, but is still a minister of the crown.

The treasurer was simply the keeper of the king's treasure, and had to look after the accounts. Still, the office was important, and Roger of Salisbury got it for his nephew, the Bishop of Ely.

These were the chief men who did the business of the Government for the king. They were generally clergymen, for the king did not wish to give these offices to any of the great barons, for fear they should grow too strong, and hand on the offices to their sons.

Most of the government was really in the king's own hands, though it was always said that he acted by the advice of his Great Council, the Witenagemote, as it had been called under the English kings. But it had changed its nature since the Conquest. It was now not a meeting of the Wise Men, but a court of the king's chief barons. It had only the forms of power; and though the king asked its advice, it does not seem to have dared to do more than agree to what he said. But by right it had the power to make laws, and it was important for the growth of English freedom that it kept even the forms of its rights; for when the people grew stronger, they could make these forms real powers.

Besides the Great Council, the king had two other courts, the *Exchequer* and the *Curia Regis.*

The Exchequer was the court which managed the accounts of the Government and received the taxes. The justiciar was the head of the court. The chancellor and all the great officers of the king's household sat at it, and were called *Barons of the Exchequer.* The Exchequer got its name from the checked cloth which covered the table round which the barons sat. Its chief meetings were held twice a year, when the sheriffs came up from the counties with their accounts. Each sheriff had to bring up the money due to the crown from his county. This money came chiefly from the rents of the land belonging to the king in each county, and from the fines paid by offenders to the county courts. The sheriff agreed to pay the king for his dues a fixed sum, which was called the *Ferm* of the county. If he got more out of the county, he kept it for himself; if less, he had to make it up out of his own purse. Accounts between the sheriff and the Exchequer were kept on a long piece of stick, in which notches were made marking the pounds, shillings, and pence paid in by the sheriffs: the stick was then split in half; half was given to the sheriff, and half kept by the Exchequer.

The king's *revenue*, as the money which came in every year to the king was called, was made up of the following payments: 1. The Ferm of the counties, which has just been explained. 2. The Danegeld. This in time was done away with under that name, but the king still laid a tax of much the same kind on the cultivated land. 3. The fines which had to be paid to the king by certain kinds of criminals, and the fees and other profits of the law courts. 4. The feudal aids. The vassals of the king had to pay him fixed sums when his eldest son was knighted, when his eldest daughter was married, when their lands passed from one hand to another. 5. Henry I. got a great deal of money by fining those who broke the forest laws and killed the king's game. These forest laws were so very harsh that they brought much suffering upon the people. All these different moneys were paid into the Exchequer, and made a very large revenue for the crown.

The Curia Regis was the King's Court, as its Latin name means, in which the king sat at the head of his barons to give justice. It acted as a sort of committee of the King's Great Council, as the Great Council did not meet often. The usual court, therefore, was made up of the officers of the royal household. The same men who were barons of the Exchequer also sat in the Curia Regis, and were then called justices. If the king was not present at the meetings of the court, the justiciar took his place and heard the cases for him. The business of this court was very great. It had to hear the cases of persons who had interfered with the king's interest; it had to settle the disputes of the chief vassals of the crown, and suits were brought up to it from the county courts which could not be settled there. Out of this court sprung, in the next century, the three courts of Westminster, which we still have: the Exchequer, King's Bench, and Common Pleas. Besides being a court for doing justice, it was also an assembly of the king's advisers, and as such it still remains in the Privy Council.

The chief reason which led the Norman kings to order this court so carefully was because they found that it brought them in a great deal of money. They did justice very much because of the large profits made by the fines which the offenders had to pay. Henry, too, was wise enough to see that the country would be safer if justice were done in it, and so he would be able to tax it more easily. So we see that the Norman kings did not do justice for the good of the people, but because they found it profitable and useful for themselves.

Henry I. felt as strongly as his father had done how necessary it was to keep the power of the barons from growing too great. He saw that the Conqueror had not gone far enough in this way. He went on to make it impossible for the barons to get strong powers of their own in the counties. He did this by connecting all the county courts with the Curia Regis. He sent his justices through the country *on circuit*, as it is called. They went first to fix what sums of money were due to the king. They sat in the shire-mote, the old English county court. At first they only had to look after money matters, but in time they sat as judges in the court as well, in the same way as our judges do now when they go on circuit. Their circuits did not become very regular till the reign of Henry II., when we shall have to speak about them again.

The important thing to notice is how the whole country was bound together under one system. Through his justices the king could make his power felt in every part of the kingdom.

The county courts were much the same as they had been in the days of Edward the Confessor. They were presided over by the sheriff, who was chosen by the king, and who represented the king—that is, stood in his place—in the county. Below them was the court of the hundred, which was a division of the county; and lastly came the manorial courts, the courts of the greater barons. These courts were all steps up to the Curia Regis, and were now all closely connected with it by the circuits of the justices.

So you see how orderly was the government of the Norman kings. The people were very safe under it, but they had to pay dearly for their safety. The taxes were very heavy, and men often found it hard to pay them. The king's wars in Normandy cost large sums, and the English people had to pay for them. The chief object of the king in his government of England was to keep the people contented, and get plenty of money out of them. In this he succeeded, for they never tried to go against him. But he had to give them the liberties, or forms of liberties, which afterward helped them to govern themselves.

This account of the Norman government may perhaps seem very dry and hard to understand. But it is not hard to see why it should interest every Englishman. It tells us about the way in which the government we now have came to exist. Our English constitution has grown up gradually and naturally out of the mixture of the old English and the Norman customs. We have traced how the Normans made use of the forms of government they found in the land: they added order and strength to what they found, and put new life into it by their great energy; so that the whole nation grew stronger through them.

A great sorrow came upon Henry I. The ship in which his son William was coming home from Normandy struck on a rock and sunk, and all in it were lost. After this terrible blow, the story tells us, Henry never smiled again. William was his only son, to whom he had hoped to leave his strong power. The only child now left him was Matilda, who had been married to the Emperor Henry V., King of Germany. Henry I. hoped that she would succeed him, but in those days it seemed a strange thing that a woman should rule over the lawless barons.

Henry did all in his power to make her sure of the crown. He made all the barons and clergy swear to be faithful to her, and he married her after the emperor's death to Geoffrey of Anjou, the son of the man he most feared, Fulk, Count of Anjou. You will remember that the Counts of Anjou had always been foes of the Normans, and so the Norman barons hated this marriage.

When Henry died in Normandy, in 1135, all seemed uncertain. There was an

end to the peace and order which the king loved, for the strong hand which kept the barons quiet was gone. No one remembered the oaths which they had sworn to Matilda. In the midst of the confusion Stephen, Count of Boulogne, son of the Conqueror's daughter, Adela, persuaded the English to choose him to be their king.—LOUISE CREIGHTON, *England a Continental Power.*

III. REIGN OF STEPHEN OF BLOIS. A.D. 1135 TO A.D. 1154.

When Henry made all his vassals in both States swear fealty to the Empress Matilda, there seemed no probability of a competitor for the crown against her. But no sooner had the king breathed his last than Stephen, Earl of Blois, hastened over from Normandy, and was received as king by the lower orders of the people. No case of a female succession had as yet occurred in the Saxon or Norman annals. The feudal law was directly against it, succession to government and authority being transmitted to such only as could serve in the armies; and when the feudal chiefs compared the two competitors for the crown, "the choice was not long and difficult between the grandson of the Conqueror by a daughter, and the granddaughter of the Conqueror by a son. The throne was empty, and the strong man was near to take it." *

Stephen was a brave soldier, very generous and affable, so that men readily loved him. He swore to give the land peace and good government, and all England took him for her king, while no one took up Matilda's cause.

Stephen was nothing but a soldier: he had no idea how to govern the country. All was disorder in the land. The barons built strong castles, and plundered the poor at their pleasure.

Stephen, who wished to make firm friends for himself, made many new earls. He took no care, as the Norman kings before him had done, to keep the barons from growing too powerful. For once feudalism got the upper hand in England, and the disorder and suffering that followed showed how wise had been the government of the Conqueror and his sons. The clergy alone tried to make peace in the land. But Stephen managed to make them his enemies.

Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, the great minister of Henry I., had gone on being justiciar under Stephen. He, too, that he might be safe in those lawless times, had built and fortified castles. His nephews, who were bishops too, had done the same, and they came to court with long trains of servants, as if they were princes. Stephen was afraid of such a powerful subject as Roger, so he seized him and made him give up his castles. This made the clergy very angry. Soon afterward the Empress Matilda landed in England, and war began again. Even Stephen's brother Henry, Bishop of Winchester, a rich and powerful man, went over to Matilda's side, because Stephen had done wrong to the Church.

The disgrace of Bishop Roger put the whole country in disorder, for he alone had looked after the Government. The laws were no longer carried out, and justice was not done in the land. For fourteen years there was war between Stephen

* White.

and Matilda. First one side met with success, then the other. Once Stephen was taken prisoner, but was let go again in return for other prisoners. Once Matilda was so hard-pressed in Oxford by Stephen, that she had to flee over the frozen floods clad all in white, so that she might not be seen against the snow.

The barons fought first on one side, and then on the other. They did not care either for Stephen or Matilda, but only wanted to get power for themselves. The clergy spoke up for peace, but they were not strong enough to do much.

In the mean while the misery of the people was very great. One chronicler says: "Some did what was right in their own eyes, but many did what they knew to be wrong all the more readily, now that the fear of the law and the king was taken away." Another says: "The barons greatly oppressed the wretched people by making them work at their castles. They took, by night and by day, those whom they thought to have any goods; seizing both men and women, they put them in prison for their gold and silver, and tortured them with pains unspeakable. Many thousands they exhausted with hunger. Then was corn dear, and cheese and butter, for there was none in the land. Wretched men starved with hunger; some lived on alms who before were rich: some fled the country. Never was more misery, and never acted heathens worse than these. . . . Men said openly that Christ slept, and his saints."

The country at last wearied of the struggle, and there came to England a man who seemed fitted to bring it to an end. This was Matilda's son, Henry of Anjou, who had now grown to manhood. Already he held many lands in France. His father's death had given him Anjou. From his mother he had Normandy, which Stephen had never been able to hold. He had married Eleanor of Guienne, the heiress of the county of Poitou and the great duchy of Guienne. In this way he was lord of a greater part of France than was the French king himself.

Henry began by making war on Stephen. But the misery of the country stirred up the clergy to try and make peace. Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, was sincerely moved by a wish to help the people, and Henry, Bishop of Winchester, aided him in persuading Stephen and Henry to come to terms.

By the Peace of Wallingford it was agreed that Stephen should keep the crown as long as he lived, on condition that it went to Henry on his death. A plan of reform was also made, most likely by Henry, so that means might be taken to bring back order and lessen the people's sufferings. Stephen did not live to carry out this plan, and probably would have been too weak to do so. He died the year after the Peace of Wallingford, and the crown passed quietly to Henry.

With Henry II. came in a new race of kings—the Angevin kings, as they were called, because of their descent from Geoffrey of Anjou. From Geoffrey too they got their surname of Plantagenet, because he had a habit of wearing in his hat a piece of broom, called in Latin *Planta Genista*.

Under the Angevin kings England made great progress. First of all Henry II. by his wisdom made her strong, for he knew how to make use of what the Norman kings had done, and how to make their work better. Afterward the weakness and bad government of John did as much for the people as Henry II.'s wisdom had done, for it taught them their own strength, and led them to make it felt.

It was under these kings that England became one. She learned to feel that she was one country, under one government. The Normans and the English, too, became one people. They had married with one another, and very few families were still of pure Norman blood. Men no longer spoke of "the Normans;" the

two people shared the name of English. French was the language used at court; Latin was the language of law and learning, but English was the language of the great mass of the people. It was used, too, by poets, and the Norman Conquest did not stop the growth of English literature, though it made it slower for a time. —Louise Creighton, *England a Continental Power.*

IV. No Normans.

Stephen of Blois was very popular with the Anglo-Normans, on account of his tried bravery, and his affable and liberal spirit. He promised, on receiving the crown, to restore to each noble the enjoyment and free use of the forests that King Henry, following the example of the two Williams, had appropriated to himself. The first years of the new reign were peaceful and happy, at least for the Norman race. The king was prodigal and magnificent; he gave much to those about him, and drew largely from the treasure that the Conqueror had amassed, and his two successors had added to. He alienated, and distributed as fiefs, the estates that William I. had reserved as his share of the conquest, and which were known as the royal domains; he created earls and independent governors of districts, formerly occupied, for the sole profit of the king, by royal prefects. Geoffrey of Anjou, the husband of Matilda, sold him peace for an annual pension of five thousand marks; and Robert of Gloucester, the natural son of the late king, who, at first, had manifested an intention of asserting the rights of his sister, founded upon the oath of the barons, took at the hands of Stephen the oaths of fidelity and homage.

But this calm did not last long; and, about the year 1137, some young barons, who had vainly demanded of the new king some of his lands and castles, set about taking them by force of arms. Hugh Bigod seized the fortress of Norwich; one Robert took that of Badington; the king compelled them to restore them, but the spirit of opposition, once kindled, spread rapidly. Henry's illegitimate son suddenly broke the peace that he had sworn to Stephen; he sent a message of defiance from Normandy, renouncing his homage to him. "Robert was incited to this course," says a contemporary writer, "by the advice of several ecclesiastics whom he had consulted, and above all by a decree of the Pope, enjoining him to perform the oath that he had sworn to his sister Matilda, in the presence of their father." Thus was annulled the brief of the same Pope in favor of Stephen, and war alone could decide between the two competitors. The malcontents, encouraged by the defection of the late king's son, were on the alert throughout England, and preparing for the conflict. "They have made me king," said Stephen, "and now they desert me; but, by the birth of God, they shall never call me the deposed king." In order to have an army in which he might place confidence, he called together auxiliaries from every part of Gaul: "as he promised good pay, soldiers came with great eagerness to enlist under his banner, cavalry, and light foot soldiers, principally Flemings and Britons."

The conquerors in England were once more divided into hostile factions. The state of things became the same as in the two preceding reigns, when the sons of the vanquished had mixed themselves up in the quarrels of their masters, and had thrown the balance on one side or the other, in the vain hope of bettering their own condition. When similar conjunctions occurred in the reign of Stephen, the Saxons kept themselves apart, rendered wise by past experience. In the quarrel between Stephen and the partisans of Matilda they declared neither for

the reigning king, who pretended that his cause was that of order and peace, nor for the daughter of the Norman and his Saxon wife: they resolved to act for themselves; and there again sprang up in England what had never been seen since the destruction of the camp of Ely, a national conspiracy to obtain the freedom of the country. "On an appointed day," says a contemporary, "a general massacre of the Normans was to take place."

The historian does not relate how this plot had been arranged, who were the leaders, what class of men joined it, nor in what place or on what signs it was to break out. We only learn from him that the conspirators of 1137 had renewed the ancient alliance of the English patriots with the inhabitants of Wales and Scotland; and that they even intended to place at the head of their liberated kingdom a Scotchman, who was, perhaps, David, the reigning king of that country, the son of Margaret and Malcolm, in whom the Saxon blood flowed without any mixture of the Norman. The plot failed in consequence of some of the conspirators, in confessing to Richard Lenoir, Bishop of Ely, suffering him to conceive a suspicion of their design, or perhaps even avowing it to him. At this period the boldest spirits never exposed themselves to an apparent danger of death without first settling the state of their conscience; and when the concourse of penitents was larger than usual it was an almost certain indication of some political movement. By scrutinizing the conduct of the Saxons in this particular, the superior clergy of the Norman race accomplished the principal object of their intrusion into England: for, by means of insidious questions put during the outpourings of the confessional, it was easy to discover the least intention of revolting, and those who were thus questioned by the priest were seldom able to keep their secret from a man whom they believed to have the power of binding and loosing them as well on earth as in heaven. The Bishop of Ely made known his discovery to the other bishops and to the higher authorities, but, in spite of the promptitude of their measures, many of the principal conspirators, says the contemporary writer, had time to make their escape. They withdrew to Wales, hoping to excite this people to war against the Normans.

This event took place sixty-six years after the last defeat of the insurgents of Ely, and seventy-two years after the battle of Hastings. Whether it may be that the chroniclers have not reported all that occurred, or that the link which bound the Saxons together, and made them a distinct people, could not after this be again cemented, we do not find, in the succeeding periods, any project conceived by the common accord of all the classes of the Anglo-Saxon population. The ancient English cry of "No Normans!" is no longer met with in the annals of history.—THIERRY'S *History of the Norman Conquest.*

III. Results of the Conquest.

GUIDE ANALYSIS.

I. The Feudal System.
1. The system in its perfection introduced into England by William the Conqueror.
2. The whole kingdom divided among William's retainers.
3. Ceremony of receiving the feud.
4. Amount of a knight's fee. Number of knight's fees.
5. Privileges of the chiefs of the Norman nobility.

II. Doomsday-Book.
1. Objects of the survey. Different stages of the survey.
2. Doomsday the terrier of William's estate.
3. Doomsday a record of the confiscation of William the Conqueror.
4. Quarrels among the conquerors.
5. Commissioner of inquiry.
6. Entries of alms in Doomsday.

III. The Effects of the Conquest on Language.
1. Gradual change caused by the Conquest.
2. The infusion of Romance words into the English.
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IV. Effect of the Conquest on Literature.
1. Character of the change in English literature.
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V. Ecclesiastical Power after the Conquest.
1. The rapid growth of this power.
2. Sources of wealth.
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VI. Social Condition of the People.
1. Differences of rank.
2. Food. Dress. Dwellings and furniture.
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I. The Feudal System.

The Norman Conquest introduced into England a new dynasty and a new nobility. The Saxon nobles were deprived of their lands and offices, and Norman leaders became the barons of England. William the Conqueror claimed the right of giving estates to whomsoever he pleased, on condition of receiving in return from the vassals of the crown their "whole free service with men and horses and arms." The system by which the lands were thus confiscated was called the feudal system. It is most important to understand what this system was, as its influence on the social and political life of the English people was felt for six centuries. The following were its chief characteristics :—

1. The land belonged to the king, and he had the disposal of it among his followers. But even when he gave the largest estates to the most powerful of his friends, it was not in full and unconditional possession. It was in the nature of a payment for past services, and a retaining fee for future aid. All the conquerors mentioned in history had recourse to some plan of the kind to enable them to retain the support of their companions; but no one had had the opportunity of trying it on so large a scale, or after the principle of it had been so long recognized. The Greeks and Romans bestowed certain farms upon their military colonists, on condition of their guarding the frontiers from attack. Charlemagne bestowed districts and even kingdoms on his supporters, imposing certain duties and obligations in return: and in the two hundred and fifty years which had elapsed since the death of that great monarch, the practice had become so regular that the mere possession of a tract of land presupposed both rights and duties at-

tached to it. We shall soon see what privileges and obligations were attached to it by the newly-introduced feudal law in England.

2. William divided the whole kingdom among his armed retainers in portions of various extent, called manors-in-chief, and conveyed to the holders of these divisions not only the property of the soil, but the government of all the inhabitants of the villages on their domains. They were so far sharers or delegates of the royal power that they held courts with power of life and limb, administered justice, coined money, and stood in the same relation to their subordinates as they themselves stood in to the king. A strong square castle, guarded with moat and draw-bridge, and a hamlet clustered near its walls, inhabited by the serfs and laborers, ornamented, perhaps, with a humble church or chapel, were the external image of the feudal system. You saw the mutual relations of power and dependence in the stately fortress and the mud-built huts. Each lord of the manor, therefore, was a kind of king upon his own estates as regarded his tenants and servants; but he held a different position as regarded the supreme chief.

3. On receiving his feud (or *property on conditions*) he bent his knee humbly at the footstool of the king, and swore to be his "man," to aid him in war against his enemies, and assist him with his contributions in peace on certain fixed occasions, such as the knighthood of his son, the marriage of his daughter, and the raising of his ransom if captured in battle. He received the king's declaration in return that he would defend him from wrong, and keep him in the undisturbed possession of his lands. Hundreds of manors were given by the friendship or policy of the Conqueror to one person; and as these overlanded proprietors could not possibly occupy the whole, or get them cultivated without personal superintendence, they divided them among their own immediate followers, exacting the same oaths of aid and allegiance to their own persons which they had made to the monarch. The wondrous chain therefore went down from the crowned potentate, with the services of many thousand mounted warriors at his command, to the holder of a couple of knights' fees, which would enable him to carry on a war against his neighbor at the head of two men. For the military organization of the country, as almost every thing else, depended on the extent of land.

4. A knight's fee, or the amount of soil that was required to maintain a horse and man, was about three hundred acres. When a manor, therefore, was of great extent, the armed dependents formed a little army of themselves, and though all were under the immediate direction and authority of their lord, they were all—the lords included—bound to do service to the king. There were sixty thousand two hundred and fifteen manors distributed among the successful freebooters who achieved the Conquest; but it is pleasant to see that the very number of these tenures, and the duties required of them, laid the foundation of their amelioration or decay. If every knight's fee was bound to find a mounted soldier for the benefit of its lord or the king, it is evident that there would not have been Normans enough to supply a third part of the number required. On great occasions, therefore, we may suppose that the proper complement was made up by mixing armed English with the array, and we need not wonder that in a few years the antagonism between men of the same domain, who were subject to the same obligations and served on the same expeditions, died entirely out, and that even the immediate successors of William could not depend on the aid of their greatest vassals in any thing which was manifestly against the interest or feelings of the nation.

5. Besides their rights over the soil, the chiefs of the Norman nobility had

many peculiar privileges, which led to great evil and injustice when civilization had opened men's eyes to the results of the system. They had the wardship of minors among their tenants; that is, the custody of the young heir till he attained twenty-one, and it soon became a settled custom that they pocketed the rents in the meantime. They had also the marriage of any heiress upon their manors, and it soon became an invariable rule that they could sell the hand of their orphan ward to the highest bidder. They could also insist on the remarriage of any widow on their domains, and either sold her hand to a rich wooer, or accepted a heavy fine for allowing her to choose for herself.—WHITE'S *History of England.*

II. DOOMSDAY-BOOK.

When the Normans had possessed themselves of the landed property of England, William ordered a survey to be made of all the lands in the kingdom. Commissioners were sent out for this purpose, and nineteen years after the battle of Hastings they gave in their report. The book in which it was recorded is called Doomsday-Book, and is still preserved in the British Museum, exactly as it was presented to the king. It will be seen from the following description of Doomsday, that it gives an account not only of the extent and value of estates, but of all ranks and conditions of the people:—

In order to give a fixed basis to the demands he made for contributions, or services of money, (to use the language of the age,) William had a great territorial inquiry made, and an universal register drawn up of all the changes of property caused in England by the Conquest; he wished to know into what hands, through the whole extent of the kingdom, the possessions of the Saxons had passed; and how many of the conquered people still held their inheritances, in virtue of private treaties concluded with himself or with his barons; how many acres were contained in each rural domain; what number of acres would suffice to maintain a man-at-arms, and how many men-at-arms there were in each county or shire of England; what was the gross amount of the produce of the cities, towns, villages, and hamlets; what was the exact property of each count, baron, knight, and serjeant-at-arms; how much land each one had, how many tenants in fee, how many Saxons, cattle, and plows.

This work, in which modern historians have seen evidence of genius, and a grand monument of national utility, was simply the result of the peculiar position of the Norman king, as head of the conquering army, and of the necessity of establishing some sort of order amid the chaos caused by the Conquest. So true is this, that in other conquests, of which the details have been transmitted to us, in that of Greece by the Latin Crusaders in the thirteenth century, for example, we find the same kind of inquest made by the leaders of the invasion, on an entirely similar plan.

In accordance with the orders of King William, Henry de Ferrieres, Walter Giffard, Adam, brother of Eudes the Seneschal, and Renie, Bishop of Lincoln, with others chosen from among the law officers, and the keepers of the royal treasury, traversed all the counties of England, holding in every place of any

importance their assembly, or council of inquiry. They summoned before them the Norman viscount of each Saxon province, or *shire*, to whom the Saxons still applied in their language, the ancient title of *shire-reve*, or sheriff. They convoked, or ordered the viscount to convoke, all the Norman barons of the province, who stated the precise bounds of their possessions, and their territorial jurisdictions; then some of the officers of the inquiry, or commissioners delegated by them, visited each large domain, and each district or *hundred*, as the Saxons expressed it. There they made the French men-at-arms of each lord, and the English inhabitants of the hundred, declare on oath how many freeholders and farmers there were on each estate, what portion was occupied by each in their own right, or at will; the names of the actual tenants; the names of those who had held property before the Conquest; and the divers mutations of the same consequent thereon; so that, say the narratives of the time, they exacted three declarations as to each estate, what they were in the time of King Edward, what they were when King William made grant of them, and what at the time of the inquiry. Below each return this formula was inscribed: *Sworn to by all the French and all the English of the hundred.*

In each township inquiry was made what imposts the inhabitants had paid to former kings, and what the town yielded to the officers of the Conqueror; it was also ascertained how many houses had been destroyed by the war of the Conquest, or to make way for the construction of fortresses, how many the conquerors had taken, how many Saxon families, reduced to extreme indigence, were not in a position to pay any thing. In the cities the oaths were administered by the high Norman authorities, who assembled the Saxon citizens in their ancient council chamber, now the property of the king, or of some foreign soldier; and in places of less importance the oaths were taken from the royal officer or provost, the priest, and six Saxons, or six villeins of each town, as the Normans termed them. This inquiry occupied six years, during which William's commissioners traversed the whole of England, with the exception of the mountainous country to the north and the west of Yorkshire, that is to say, the five modern counties of Durham, Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Lancaster. Perhaps in this extent of country, so cruelly devastated at two several times, there was not sufficient cultivated land, the divisions of property were too unsettled, for it to be useful or possible to make the returns; perhaps, also, the commissioners of the Norman king feared that if they carried their assizes into the townships of Northumbria the Saxon words might be rung in their ears which had been the signal for the massacre of Vaulcher the Lorrain, and his hundred men.

Be this as it may, the rent-roll, or, to use the ancient term, the *terrier* of the Norman Conquest makes no mention of the conquered domains beyond the province of York. The drawing-up of this roll for each province mentioned was *modeled* on a uniform plan. The name of the king was placed at the head, with the list of his lands and revenues in the province; then followed the names of the chief and smaller proprietors, in the order of their military rank and territorial wealth. The Saxons who had been spared by special favor in the general spoliation were only found in the lowest ranks; for the small number of men of that race who were still free proprietors, or tenants in their own right under the king, as the conquerors expressed it, were such only of very small estates; they were inscribed at the end of each chapter under the title of *thanes* of the king, or with divers qualifications of domestic offices in the household of the Conqueror. The rest of the names of an Anglo-Saxon character, which are scattered here and

there throughout the roll, belong to farmers of a few fractions, larger or smaller, of the estates of the Norman earls, knights, serjeant-at-arms, and bowmen.

Such is the authentic book, preserved to the present day, from which most of the instances of expropriation recorded in this narrative have been derived. This invaluable book, in which the entire Conquest was registered, in order that the remembrance of it might never be effaced, was called by the Normans the Great Roll, the Royal Roll, or the Roll of Winchester, because it was kept in the treasury of Winchester Cathedral. The Saxons called it by a more solemn name, the book of the last judgment, Doomsday-book, perhaps because it contained the sentence of their irrevocable expropriation. But if this book was a warrant of dispossession to the English nation, it was no less so to some of the foreign usurpers. Their commander cunningly availed himself of it to make the numerous mutations of property operate to his advantage, and to legitimate his personal pretensions to many of the lands seized and occupied by others. He claimed proprietorship, by inheritance, of all that had been in the possession of Edward, the last king but one of the Anglo-Saxons, of Harold the last king, and of all Harold's family; by the same title he laid claim to all public property, and to the supreme lordship of all towns unless he had expressly alienated them, wholly or partly, by an authenticated diploma, *par lettre et saisine*, as the Norman lawyers say.

In the moment of victory, at that time of brotherhood between the commander and his companions, no one had thought of the formalities of letters-patent and of seisin, and each of those to whom William had said before the battle, "What I shall take, you will take," had made himself master of his portion; but after the Conquest the soldiers of the invasion found that the power which they had raised over the heads of the English weighed, in part at least, heavily on their own. It was thus that William de Warrenne's right to the lands of two free Englishmen in the county of Norfolk was contested, because they had formerly been dependencies of a royal manor of Edward; it was the same with one of Eustace's domains in the province of Huntingdon, and also with fifteen acres of land held by Miles Crispin, in that of Berks. An estate occupied by Engelry in the county of Essex was, in the words of the Great Roll, seized into the king's hands, because Engelry had not sent to give an account of his title. The king seized in the same manner all the lands to which he laid claim, and of which the holders, though Normans, could not or would not render account.

Another pretension on his part was, that each domain which in the Saxon times had paid to King Edward any rent or service, should, although held by a Norman, pay the same rent or the same service. This claim, founded on succession to the rights of an English king, which could not be recognized by those who had disinherited the English race, was, from the first, badly received by the conquerors. Freedom from imposts or services in money, except some voluntary contributions, appeared to them the inviolable prerogative of their victory; and they looked upon the condition of customary tax-payers as wholly confined to the conquered nation. Many resisted the claims of their commander, disdaining to bear the imposition of personal servitude for the land which they had conquered. But there were some who weakly yielded, and their concession, whether voluntary or bought by King William, weakened the opposition of the others. Raoul the Courbespine refused for a long time to pay any rent for the houses that he had taken in the town of Canterbury, and Hugh de Montfort for the lands that he occupied in the county of Essex. These two chiefs could indulge their haughty tempers with impunity, but the pride of men of less power and importance was

sometimes severely punished. One Osbert, called the Fisherman, not choosing to pay the rent that his land had formerly given to King Edward, as a dependence of his domain, was expropriated by the royal agents, and his estate offered to whoever would pay for him; Raoul Taille-bois paid, says the Great Roll, and took possession of the land as forfeited by Osbert the Fisherman.

The Norman king also endeavored to levy on his own countrymen, in the towns and the estates in his dominions, the ancient duty established by the Saxon law. As regards the English inhabitants of these towns and estates, besides this tax, rigorously exacted under the title of local custom, and often doubled or tripled, they were further subject to a casual, arbitrary, and unequal contribution, capriciously and harshly levied, which the Normans called *tuille* or *tuillage*. The Great Roll gives a list of the king's burgesses liable to this tax, in the order of the cities, towns, and boroughs. "These are the burgesses of the king at Colchester: Keolman, who holds one house and five acres of land; Leofwin, who holds two houses and twenty-five acres, Ulfric, Edwin, Wulfstan, Manwin," etc. The Norman chiefs and soldiers also levied tuille on the Saxons who had fallen to them, either in the towns or the rural districts. This is what was called in the language of the conquerors *having* a burgess, or a free Saxon; and in this sense freemen were counted by the head, sold, given, engaged, lent, or even divided into half-shares by the Normans. The Great Roll says that a certain viscount had in the town of Ipswich two Saxon burgesses, one in pledge and the other for debts; and that King William had, by an authentic act, lent the Saxon Edwig to Raoul Taille-bois, to keep him as long as he lived.

Many quarrels among the conquerors for the spoil of the conquered, many invasions of Normans upon Normans, as the roll of inquiry has it, were also registered in every corner of England. For example, William de Warrenne, in the county of Bedford, had disseized Walter Espee of half a hide, or half an acre of land, and had taken from him two horses. Elsewhere, it was Hugh de Corbon who had usurped from Roger Bigot *half of a free Englishman*, that is to say, five acres of land. In the county of Hants, William de la Chesnage claimed from Priot a certain piece of land on the pretext that it belonged to the Saxon whose possessions he had taken. This latter instance, and many others of the same nature, prove that the Normans regarded as their legitimate property all that the former proprietor might legally have claimed; and that the foreign invader, considering himself as a natural successor, made the same investigations, and instituted the same civil prosecutions, as the Saxon's heir might have done. He called upon the English inhabitants of the district, as witnesses, to attest the extent of the rights given him by his substitution in the place of the man whom he had killed or expelled. The memory of the inhabitants, disturbed by the sufferings and tumult of the Conquest, often responded imperfectly to these inquiries; the Norman, also, who wished to dispute the right of his countrymen, refused to abide by the deposition of this vile populace of the vanquished nation. In this case the only means of terminating the dispute was either a trial by single combat, or a judgment in the King's Court.

The Norman *terrier* speaks, in many places, of unjust invasions, seizures, and claims. It is certainly a strange thing to meet with this word *justice* in the register of the expropriation of an entire people; and it would be impossible to understand this book if we did not reflect at each sentence that in it *inheritance* signifies the spoliation of an Englishman, that every Englishman despoiled by a Norman is there termed the *predecessor* of the Norman; that for a Norman to be

just is to have abstained from taking the possession of an Englishman who had been killed, or driven out by any other Norman; and that to act otherwise is called *injustice*, which is proved by the following passage: "In the county of Bedford, Raoul Taille-bois has unjustly disseized Nigel of five hydes of land, which are well-known to have formed part of the inheritance of his *predecessor*, and part of which is still occupied by the concubine of Nigel."

Some of the dispossessed Saxons ventured to present themselves before the Commissioners of the Inquiry to claim their rights; there were some even whose names were enrolled in the register, with terms of humble supplication, never employed by a Norman. These men declared that they were poor and wretched; and appealed to the clemency and mercy of the king. Those who, after much cringing, were suffered to retain some small portion of their paternal inheritance, were forced to pay for this favor by degrading and absurd services, or to receive it under the no less humiliating title of alms. In the roll sons are said to hold the possessions of their fathers as *an alms*. Free women keep their fields as *an alms*. Another woman remains in the enjoyment of her husband's estate on condition of feeding the king's dogs. And, lastly, a mother and son receive their ancient inheritance as *a gift*, on condition of their offering up prayers daily for the soul of the king's son, Richard.—THIERRY'S *History of England.*

III. EFFECTS OF THE CONQUEST ON LANGUAGE.

Of all the dreams which have affected the history of the times on which we are engaged, none has led to more error than the notion that William the Conqueror set to work with a fixed purpose to root out the use of the English tongue. He is not the latest conqueror, or would-be conqueror, of England against whom such a charge has been brought. More than two hundred years after William's day, his successor, Edward the First, in the course of the wars which, as Duke of Aquitaine, he waged against his faithless overlord at Paris, found that it served his purpose to stir up the patriotism of his English subjects by setting forth the threatening horrors of a French conquest. Foremost among them stood the design of the enemy, if he succeeded in carrying out his purposes, to wipe out the use of the English tongue. By that time, though French was in constant official use in England, the French origin of the reigning family was practically forgotten. Yet nothing is more certain than that the Conqueror was hardly more likely than Edward himself to attempt a deliberate rooting up of the speech of their island kingdom. The notion that any such design was entertained comes from that great store-house of errors which, till very lately, so deeply affected the history of these times. The statement of the false Ingulf proves only that, when the forgery was made, men were seeking for an explanation of the facts which they saw around them. French still was, or lately had been, the speech of official documents and of polite intercourse. Men sought to find a cause for a state of things which seemed so strange, and they could think of no cause except a deliberate policy on the part of a conqueror whose own speech was French. The case is one of the many cases in which popular belief is so easily led to give to a single man the credit of changes which were really due to the gradual working of general causes. The long use of French in England as a polite and official tongue, the large French infusion which had made its way into our language, are among the fruits of William's conquest. They are therefore among the fruits of William's personal character and actions. Had Eadward left a son, had Harold's sol-

diers kept their post, instead of following the flying Normans, the sentences which I am now writing might be kept as free from words of foreign birth as they still might be if I were writing in the tongue of Germany, Holland, or Denmark. But though, in this sense, the later history of the English language has been directly affected by the events of the Conquest, the way in which it has been affected by them is wholly different from that which is set forth in the Ingulfic legend. No legislative measure was ever passed against the use of the English tongue. The changes which did take place were the natural and silent result of circumstances, nor were those changes by any means sudden or immediate results of the Conquest. In this, as in all other matters, William made no more change than was absolutely necessary for his immediate purposes. That is to say, in the case now before us he made no formal change at all. But the transfer of the English crown to a French-speaking king, the partition of the highest offices and the greatest estates in England among his French-speaking followers, did lead, slowly but surely, to two results of the highest importance to the history of our language. French for a time supplanted English as the speech of courtly intercourse, of the lighter forms of literature, and of such official documents as were not written in Latin. The evil in this respect was temporary; in another respect it has been lasting, and we suffer under it to this day. As the French-speaking classes gradually came to leave off French and to make English their common speech, as the English-speaking classes gradually came to adopt words and idioms from what was supposed to be the politer tongue, a crowd of words expressing foreign things or foreign aspects of things made their way into our ancient speech. The result was that the native tongue of England received a greater infusion of foreign words than has been received by any other European tongue. And the same causes did more than this. The shock which our language thus underwent, its fall from the rank of a courtly and literary speech to that of a mere speech of the people, heightened and hastened another process, which, had the Norman Conquest never happened, would doubtless have affected our language less swiftly and less fully. Had French never been spoken in England, had no French words intruded themselves into our language, the great change which distinguishes the English of our day from the English of a thousand years back would still have taken place. Of the elaborate system of grammatical inflexions which came naturally to the lips of Alfred, our modern tongue keeps but few and feeble traces. But this change is in no way peculiar to ourselves; we share it with our Teutonic brethren on the mainland. The modern forms of the Scandinavian and the continental Nether-Dutch have, without the help of any Norman Conquest, become as little inflectional as the modern form of English. The High-Dutch indeed keeps a larger share of the ancient store, but the inflections even of the modern High-Dutch are but fragments of the old grammatical wealth of our common fathers. Their survival too is, to a certain extent, artificial; their accurate preservation marks the tongue of polite literature rather than the tongue of the people. Had no Norman ever set foot on our shores, the inflectional Old-English would still have passed, sooner or later, into the non-inflectional modern English. But the gradual and indirect effect of the Norman settlement among us was at once to hasten the inevitable process and to make it more complete.—FREEMAN'S *Norman Conquest of England*, vol. v.

IV. Effects of the Conquest on Literature.

But the literary tastes for which the Norman Conquest made an opening wrought far more of change, far more of evil, than any changes that could be wrought in the language itself. There are moments in which we are tempted to say that it would have been better for the English tongue to have died out utterly than for it to be used, as it has been used, as an instrument for making Englishmen forget that they are Englishmen. That process of turning our backs upon ourselves, of denying the history of our race, of calling ourselves by any name rather than that by which our fathers called themselves—the habit of looking anywhere save to the rock from whence we are hewn and to the hole of the pit whence we are digged—all the errors against which we have to strive in preaching the hard doctrine that Englishmen are themselves and not some other people—all this comes of the Norman Conquest and of the literary tastes to which the Norman Conquest gave birth. As one man from the banks of the Severn, born of a foreign father, living in a foreign land, writing in a foreign tongue, never lost his English heart, his love for England and her history, so it was another man by the banks of the Severn who first taught the English tongue to bear witness against itself, who degraded it to become the channel of those wretched fables which in the minds of so many Englishmen have displaced alike the true history and the worthier legends of our fathers. The opposite to Orderic of Ettingsham is Layamon of Ernley. He had read the English book of Bæda and the Latin book of Austin, but he turned from them to the book that a Frenck clerk made that was hight Wace. Wace truly well could write; we blame not him for writing, nor do we blame the noble Eleanor, that was Henry's Queen the high King's, for hearkening to what he wrote. It was something that the Duchess of Aquitaine and the Canon of Bayeux should seek to know something of the past days of the conquered island; and, if ill luck threw the monstrous fables of Geoffrey in their way, the blame was his and not theirs. It was no crime in Wace to write a Brut in French; it was treason against the tongue and history of his race for Layamon to translate that Brut into English. Times had indeed changed since the days when the gleemen of England sang how West-Saxons hewed the fliers mightily with mill-sharp swords, and how Mercians shrank not from the hard hand-play. Then every national triumph awoke the thought of earlier national triumphs, and, as Scot and Northman fled before the sword of King and Ætheling, men thought of the old books which told how Angles and Saxons came from the east over the broad sea, how they overcame the Welsh, and gat them a land to dwell in. In the tenth century men knew that they were Englishmen; at the beginning of the thirteenth some of them at least had forgotten it. To the man who translated the French Brut, his own folk had become Saxish people and heathen hounds, and Æthelstan, the lord of earls, the giver of bracelets, is in his hands changed into an invader from beyond the sea. All trace of national feeling must have gone from the heart of the man who could waste so many good words of English speech upon the silly tales of Brute and Arthur. The first sinner has had his following; he had done his work. To the mass of Englishmen Arthur and his fantastic company seem more their own than Hengest and Cerdic. We see what the coming of the stranger had done; it had rooted out the truest memories of our national life. Fancy for a moment a Brut sung at the court of Æthelstan, or even at the court of the denationalized Eadward. Even at that court men would

not have displaced the heroes of the English name for the fancied glories of an enemy whose name neither Bæda nor the Chroniclers thought it worth while to record. From the Brut of Layamon we turn with pleasure to the contemporary Proverbs which, by a pardonable fiction, bear the name of Ælfred. If they prove nothing else, they at least prove that even then there were Englishmen by whom the name and the worth of the greatest of Englishmen were not forgotten.—FREEMAN'S *Norman Conquest of England.*

V. Ecclesiastical Power after the Conquest.

The rapid and steady growth of the ecclesiastical power in England from the period of the Conquest is one of the most remarkable characteristics of that age. This progress we must steadily keep in view if we would rightly understand the general condition of society. All the great offices of the Church, with scarcely an exception, were filled by Normans. The Conqueror sternly resisted any attempts of bishops or abbots to control his civil government. The Red King misappropriated their revenues in many cases. Henry I. quarreled with Anselm about the right of investiture, which the Pope declared should not be in the hands of any layman; but Henry compromised a difficult question with his usual prudence. Whatever difficulties the Church encountered during seventy years, and especially during the whole course of Henry's reign, wealth flowed in upon the ecclesiastics, from king and noble, from burgess and socman; and every improvement of the country increased the value of Church possessions. It was not only from the lands of the crown, and the manors of earls, that bishoprics and monasteries derived their large endowments. Henry I. founded the Abbey of Reading, but the "mimus" of Henry I. built the priory and hospital of St. Bartholomew. This "pleasant-witted gentleman," as Stowe calls the royal "mimus," (which Percy interprets "minstrel,) having, according to the legend, "diverted the palaces of princes with courtly mockeries and triflings" for many years, bethought himself at last of more serious matters, and went to do penance at Rome. He returned to London; and, obtaining a grant of land in a part of the king's market of Smithfield, which was a filthy marsh where the common gallows stood, there erected the priory, whose Norman arches as satisfactorily attest its date as Henry's charter. The piety of a court jester in the twelfth century, when the science of medicine was wholly empirical, founded one of the most valuable medical schools of the nineteenth century. The desire to raise up splendid churches, in the place of the dilapidated Saxon buildings, was a passion with Normans, whether clerks or laymen. Ralph Flambard, the bold and unscrupulous minister of William II., erected the great priory of Christchurch in his capacity of bishop. But he raised the necessary funds with his usual financial vigor. He took the revenues of the canons into his hands, and put the canons upon a short allowance till the work was completed. The Cistercian order of monks was established in England late in the reign of Henry I. Their rule was one of the most severe mortification and of the strictest discipline. Their lives were spent in labor and in prayer, and their one frugal daily meal was eaten in silence. While other religious orders had their splendid abbeys amid large communities, the Cistercians humbly asked grants of land in the most solitary places, where the recluse could meditate without interruption by his fellow-men, amid desolate moors and in the uncultivated gorges of inaccessible mountains. In such a barren district Walter

L'Espec, who fought at Northallerton, founded Rievaulx Abbey. It was a "solitary place in Blakemore," in the midst of hills. The Norman knight had lost his son; and here he derived a holy comfort in seeing the monastic buildings rise under his munificent care, and the waste lands become fertile under the incessant labors of the devoted monks. The ruins of Tinturn Abbey and Melrose Abbey, whose solemn influences have inspired the poets of our own age with thoughts akin to the contemplations of their Cistercian founders, belong to a later period of ecclesiastical architecture: for the dwellings of the original monks have perished, and the "broken arches," and "shafted oriel," the "imagery," and "the scrolls that teach thee to live and die," speak of another century, when the Norman architecture, like the Norman character, was losing its distinctive features, and becoming "Early English." We dwell a little upon these Norman foundations, to show how completely the Church was spreading itself over the land, and asserting its influence in places where man had seldom trod, as well as in populous towns, where the great cathedral was crowded with earnest votaries, and the lessons of peace were proclaimed amid the distractions of unsettled government, and the oppressions of lordly despotism. Whatever was the misery of the country, the ordinary family ties still bound the people to the universal Christian Church, whether the priest was Norman or English. The new-born infant was dipped in the great Norman font, as the children of the Confessor's time had been dipped in the ruder Saxon. The same Latin office, unintelligible in words but significant in its import, was said and sung when the bride stood at the altar, and the father was laid in his grave. The vernacular tongue gradually melted into one dialect; and the penitent and the confessor were the first to lay aside the great distinction of race and country—that of language.

The Norman prelates were men of learning and ability, of taste and magnificence; and, whatever might have been the luxury and even vices of some among them, the vast revenues of the great sees were not wholly devoted to worldly pomp, but were applied to noble uses. After the lapse of seven centuries we still tread with reverence those portions of our cathedrals in which the early Norman architecture is manifest. There is no English cathedral in which we are so completely impressed with the massive grandeur of the round-arched style, as by Durham. The lines of Congreve, which Johnson thought the finest piece of description in our language, especially apply to such architecture:—

> "How reverend is the face of this tall pile,
> Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads
> To bear aloft its arched and ponderous roof,
> By its own weight made steadfast and immovable,
> Looking tranquillity."

Durham Cathedral was commenced in the middle of the reign of Rufus, and the building went on through the reign of Henry I. Canterbury was commenced by Archbishop Lanfranc, soon after the Conquest, and was enlarged and altered in various details, till it was burned in 1174. Some portions of the original building remain. Rochester was commenced eleven years after the Conquest, and its present nave is an unaltered part of the original building. Chichester has nearly the same date of its commencement, and the building, of this church was continued till its dedication in 1148. Norwich was founded in 1094, and its erection was carried forward so rapidly that in seven years there were sixty monks here

located. Winchester is one of the earliest of these noble cathedrals; but its Norman feature of the round arch is not the general characteristic of the edifice, the original piers having been recased in the pointed style in the reign of Edward III. The dates of these buildings, so grand in their conception, so solid in their execution, would be sufficient of themselves to show the wealth and activity of the Church during the reigns of the Conqueror and his sons. But, during this period of seventy years, and in part of the reign of Stephen, the erection of monastic buildings was universal in England, as in continental Europe. The Crusades gave a most powerful impulse to the religious fervor. In the enthusiasm of chivalry, which covered many of its enormities with outward acts of piety, vows were frequently made by wealthy nobles that they would depart for the holy wars. But sometimes the vow was inconvenient. The lady of the castle wept at the almost certain perils of her lord; and his projects of ambition often kept the lord at home to look after his own especial interests. Then the vow to wear the cross might be commuted by the foundation of a religious house. Death-bed repentance for crimes of violence and a licentious life increased the number of these endowments. It has been computed that three hundred monastic establishments were founded in England during the reigns of Henry I., Stephen, and Henry II.—KNIGHT'S *Popular History of England.*

VI. SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

As the Government was in the hands of a foreign race, the conquered English people suffered great hardships and oppression. The object of the king seemed to be to wring as much money out of the people as he possibly could, and the nobles, to satisfy his demands, fleeced all those under them. It was long before king and nobles forgot that they belonged to a foreign race, and made themselves one with the English people.

The Normans were not such great eaters as the Saxons, but their food was more varied and more daintily prepared. The number of their meals, and the time when they were taken, are shown by the common proverb:—

> To rise at five, to dine at nine,
> To sup at five, to bed at nine,
> Makes a man live to ninety-nine.

The peacock and crane were favorite dishes, and the boar's head was considered a royal dainty. The finest wheat was used for the bread of the higher classes, but the common people were content to be fed with brown bread, made of rye, oats, and barley. The names we now give to various kinds of meat show that they formed at first the dishes of the rich. The live animal is known by a Saxon name, but its flesh when prepared for the table is distinguished by a Norman word. Thus, *ox* and *cow* are Saxon, but *beef* is Norman; *calf* is Saxon, while *veal* is Norman; *sheep* is Saxon, but *mutton* Norman; in the same manner we have *swine* and *pork*, *deer* and *venison*, *fowl* and *pullet*. The rich drank spiced wines and mead; and the poorer classes cider, perry, and ale. The wine, however, was often of a very poor quality. It is described by one writer of the time to have been so full of dregs, and so greasy, and tasting of pitch, that the nobles sometimes drank it with eyes shut and teeth closed.

The general dress of the Normans consisted of the tunic, the cloak, the long

tight hose, the leg bandages, and shoes or short boots. Their head-covering was something like the modern Scotch bonnet. The Saxons dressed as before the Conquest, and were distinguished by their long flowing locks and beards. The Normans on their first arrival were closely shaven, both on the face and the back of the head, so that they looked much like monks. But in a few years they discontinued this fashion, and imitated the Saxons to such an extent that the clergy denounced their long hair as sinful. In the reign of Rufus and Henry I. tunics with long flowing sleeves, and shoes with long toes of every kind of shape, became the fashion. The dress of the women was much like that of the Saxons, only the gown was called a robe, and the vail a *couvre-chef*, (or head covering,) from which we get our word kerchief. They, like the males, indulged in long sleeves almost reaching to the ground. The hair was long, and plaited in two braids, which hung down the back; sometimes it was covered by the kerchief, which was brought together under the chin, and made the wearer look like a man.

As the Normans came into a conquered country, their first thought was to build dwellings for safety; and to insure this they erected strong castles, and surrounded them with thick walls and a ditch. These buildings usually consisted of three divisions, the inner and outer courts, and the keep, which formed the baron's residence. The entrance to the castle was guarded by the barbican, which, in most cases, was a strong gateway in front of the main gate. The passage through the gateway could be closed, in addition to the gates, by a spiked iron grating, called a portcullis, which was let down from above, and the archway was pierced with holes, through which melted lead and boiling pitch could be poured upon an enemy. The gray ruins of many of these buildings, found here and there throughout the country, give us a good idea of the massive strength of the homes of the nobility in the feudal times.

As the Norman barons spent much of their time in the open air, they furnished their dwellings very meagerly. The chief room was the large hall, and this simply contained a long rough table and some rude benches. Carpets were unknown; but the floors were covered with straw in winter and grass in summer. The usual sleeping place was a bench, or the floor covered with a mat. The lord's bedroom was furnished with a few stools, couches, and a crib containing a straw bed, and the ladies of the families were similarly supplied. From the scanty furniture of the homes of the rich we can imagine what those of the poor must have been. The castles and churches of this period were built according to the Norman style of architecture, of which the characteristic is the rounded arch.

The Normans were fond of out-door sports. The tournament, or joust, was their chief amusement. This was a kind of mock fight which took place within a large inclosure, called the lists. The nobles sat round in raised galleries, and the common people crowded outside the barriers, to witness the courage and skill of the contending knights. At each end of the lists tents were pitched for the rival combatants; and when the trumpet gave the signal for the onset the armor-clad knights rushed to the attack. The weapons were usually blunted lances, but sometimes they contended with sharp weapons, as in real war, and then the sport often ended in bloodshed and death. Sometimes two sides were formed, each consisting of many knights, and this feature of the tournament was called the *mêlée*. At the end of the contest the victors received the rewards of their gallantry at the hands of the "Queen of Love or Beauty"—a lady who had been elected to preside over the sports of the day. Hunting was a very general amuse-

ment of the upper classes. The out-door sports of the lower classes were archery, bull-baiting, and playing at quarter-staff. Cock-fighting was at that time confined to children, and Shrove Tuesday was the favorite day for the sport. The chief in-door amusement was the performance of some dramatic incident by traveling players. Such exhibitions were often rude in language and coarse in manner, and the clergy endeavored to supplant them by the introduction of the religious drama—the origin of the miracle and mystery plays, which were founded on Scripture facts and incidents in the lives of the saints. Gambling, juggling, mimicry, and dancing were also favorite in-door amusements.

The Normans introduced the use of surnames, which were taken from some personal quality or trade, or from some peculiarity, as Redhead, Butcher, Curthose. Some were formed by adding *son* to the Christian name, as Johnson. The Celtic *Mac*, as Macpherson; the O, as O'Connell; and the Norman *Fitz*, as Fitzwilliam, mean the same as *son.*—*Condensed from Morris' History of England.*

A COURSE OF READING FOR THE NORMAN PERIOD.

Freeman's "History of the Norman Conquest" is universally accepted as one of the best works on this subject, although it is Anti-Norman in its sympathies.* The first three volumes are mainly introductory to the account of the Conquest, and give an excellent summary of English history down to that event.

Palgrave's "History of Normandy and England" is highly commended by all students of early English history.

Augustine Thierry's "History of the Norman Conquest," from the French, is brilliantly written, though he is charged with considerable exaggeration on his own side of the question.

Wright's "History of Dress, Manners, and Sentiments in England during the Middle Ages," is a work of much interest.

An excellent paper on the Conquest may be found in the "Atlantic" for October, 1866.

Miss Yonge's "Cameos" takes up the later history of the Anglo-Saxon period, and extends through the Norman period.

Bulwer's "Harold" may be compared with Kingsley's "Hereward" to bring out in bold relief the different aspects of the struggle.

Keats' historical drama, "Stephen and Maud," begins with Stephen's defeat by the Empress Maud, and ends with the death of his son Eustace.

For the ecclesiastical history of the Norman period see chapter on that subject in Freeman's "Norman Conquest." Consult also Maclear's "History of Christian Missions in the Middle Ages," and the third and fourth volumes of Milman's "Latin Christianity," (see the index in vol. viii.)

For a thorough manual of early constitutional history see Edward Freeman's "Growth of the English Constitution from the Earliest Times."

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* Mr. Freeman says that his view of the Norman Conquest was formed by uniting the views of the "two most eminent writers who have dealt with the subject, Augustine Thierry and Sir Francis Palgrave."—*The Norman Conquest*, vol. i, preface.

CHAPTER VIII.

LITERATURE OF THE EARLY NORMAN PERIOD.

The Norman Conquest wrought great changes on both the learning and the literature of England. Saxon scholarship had been growing rustier every day since the great Alfred died; and those Saxon prelates who held sees at the time of the Conquest were far behind the age as men of letters. William therefore displaced many of them, to make room for polished scholars from the Continent—such as Lanfranc and Anselm, who held the see of Canterbury in succession. The Conqueror, moreover, founded many fine abbeys and convents, within whose quiet cells learned men could think and write in safe and honored leisure. Schools sprang up on every side. The great seminaries at Oxford and Cambridge—already distinguished as schools—were elevated to the rank of universities, destined to be formidable rivals of the older institutions at Paris and Bologna. Latin being the professional language of churchmen, by whom in those days nearly all learning was monopolized, we find a vast number of Latin works written during the centuries which immediately followed the Norman Conquest.

At this time what is called the Scholastic Philosophy, founded on Aristotle's method of argument, grew to a most extravagant degree of favor. Hence imaginative writings of all kinds suffered a great blight. It was only in the ballads of the people that fancy found utterance at all.

John of Salisbury, who, going to Paris in 1136, spent several years in attending the lectures of the best masters there, wrote a book called *Metalogicus*, exposing the absurd and childish wrangling which then bore the dignified name of logic. Such questions as the following were seriously discussed in learned assemblies: "If a man buy a cloak, does he also buy the hood?" and, "If a hog be carried to market with a rope tied round its neck and held at the other end by a man, is the animal carried to market by the man or by the rope?" John of Salisbury's chief work was called "Polycraticon," a pleasant and learned treatise upon the "Frivolities of Courtiers and the Footsteps of Philosophers." This accomplished monk died in 1182, being then Bishop of Chartres.

The great feature in the literary history of this time was the introduction into England of the Norman Romance. With chivalry, from which it was inseparable, and from whose stirring life it took all its colors, the romance rose and fell.

From the corrupted Latin a group of dialects arose, called the Roman or Romance tongues; which, owing to slight intermixture with the barbarous languages, assumed somewhat different forms in Italy, France, and Spain. In France two dialects of the Romance language were spoken, distinguished in name by the peculiar words used for our "yes"—*oc*, (*hoc*,) and *oyl*, *oy*, or *oui*, (probably *illud*.) The language of *oc* was spoken in the south, and the language of *oyl* in the north of France. The Langue d'Oc, otherwise known as the Provencial, which was sung by the famous troubadours, blazed out a brief day of glory, was then trampled down with all its lovely garlands of song by Montfort and his Crusaders, and now exists merely as the rude *patois* of the province that bears its name. The Langue d'Oyl,

growing into the modern French, has influenced our literature in more ways than one. The lays, sung by the *trouvères* of northern France in praise of knights and knighthood, were the delight of the Norman soldiers who fought at Hastings; and when these soldiers had settled as conquerors on the English soil, what was more natural than that they should still love the old Norman lays, and that a new generation of poets should learn in the Normanized island to sing in Norman too?

It is no wonder that the list of Saxon writers during the time when the nation lay stunned by the Conqueror's sword should be short. The Saxons were then slaves; and slaves never have any literature worth speaking of. Some romances and chronicles, echoes of the lays sung by their Norman masters, were all that remained to show that the Saxon tongue was living. Yet living it was, with a wealth of life pent up in its hidden root, which was destined at no very distant day to clothe the shorn stem with the brightest honors of leafage and bloom.

Latin Writers.

Let us first glance at the Latin writers of the Norman times. As has been already said, Latin was the language of churchmen, the most honored class in the nation: and therefore the amount of Latin writing, both in prose and verse, was very great. Sermons were often preached in Latin.

The chief use of Latin at this time was in the compilation of the chronicles or historical records. We owe much to the patient monks whose pens traced weary page after page of these old books. There is, indeed, nothing like fine writing in any of these chronicles: and in many of them fiction mixes inextricably with true history, like tares in the wheat-field. Yet much good sound truth has been extracted from the old chronicles; and from such legends as Arthur, Lear, and Cymbeline some of the finest blossoms of our literature have sprung.

A history of the Abbey of Croyland, or Crowland, in Lincolnshire, extending from 664 to 1091, is said to have been written by Ingulphus, who was abbot there for thirty-four years, (1075–1109.) But it is doubtful whether or not this was really the work of Ingulphus: and certainly it must not be taken as a trustworthy record of passing events, for it is full of false and improbable statements.

Ordericus Vitalis, who was born in 1075, at the village of Atcham on the Severn, and spent all his life, after his eleventh year, abroad, was the writer of an ecclesiastical history extending from the creation to the year 1141. His account of the Norman Conquest is minute; and that part of his history narrating the events of the first four years of the Conqueror's reign (1066–1070) is much prized.

The name of William of Malmesbury, born probably about the date of the Conquest, is remarkable among the many chronicles of this period. His "History of the English Kings," in five books, extends from the landing of the Saxons to 1120; and then three other books, called "Historia Novella," are added, carrying the story down to 1142. As an historian he excels in what is, comparatively speaking, careful writing, and a more exact balancing of facts than was common with the cowled chroniclers of the day. But his pages, too, abound in stories of miracles and prodigies, reflecting the "all digestive" superstition of the time, from which the wisest heads were not free.

Geoffrey of Monmouth, who died in 1154, is noted for having preserved the fine antique legends of the Celtic race in his "History of the Britons," which he professed to have translated from an old Welsh chronicle. Here we find the story

of Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, upon which many noble works of our literature have been composed. The charm of such a book must necessarily be fatal to its value as a history; for the writer, letting his fancy play upon the adornment of these dim legends, mixes fact with fiction in a confusion that cannot be disentangled. Henry of Huntington may also be named among the crowd of chroniclers who wrote on the early history of England.

A favorite kind of light reading, often conned by the refectory fire in the long winter nights, was an *olla podrida* of interesting stories, gathered from every possible source, and done into Latin by unknown hands. These books, called *Gesta*, were made up of monkish legends, chivalric romances, ghost-stories, parables, satirical flings at the foibles of women, and such stories from the classics as the Skeleton of Pallas, and the Leap of Curtius. The chief reason why they are worthy of our notice here is, that Shakspeare, Scott, and other great wizards of the fancy, drawing some of these dim old stories from their dusty sleep, have touched them with the wand of genius, and turned the lumps of dull lead into jewels of the finest gold.

Norman-French Writers.

When the chase was over, and the Norman lords caroused in their English halls around the oak board, flinging scraps of the feast to their weary hounds that crouched on the rush-strewn floor, the lays of the *trouvères* were sung by wandering minstrels, who were always warmly welcomed and often richly paid. Many poets of English birth soon took up this foreign strain, and wrote lays in Norman-French. The deeds of Alexander, Charlemagne, Havelok the Dane, Guy of Warwick, Cœur de Lion, and other such heroes, were celebrated in these romances. In the earlier stories there is more probability; but by degrees what critics call the "machinery" of the poem, that is, the introduction of supernatural beings as actors in the drama, becomes wild and fanciful, borrowing largely from the wierd superstitions of the north and the east. As we read, knights and ladies, grim giants dwelling in enchanted castles, misshapen dwarfs, fairies kindly and malevolent, dragons and earthdrakes, magicians with their potent wands, pass before us in a highly-colored, much-distorted panorama.

The romances relating to King Arthur possess a special interest for us, since our laureate and a brother bard have founded poems on these old tales. The strange and profane legend of the Saint Greal is mixed up throughout with the story of Arthur and his knights. The Greal was said to be the dish from which our Saviour ate the Last Supper. It was then taken, according to the legend, by Joseph of Arimathea, who used it to catch the blood flowing from the wounds of the Saviour. Too sacred for human gaze, it became invisible, and only revealed itself in visions to the pure knight Sir Galahad, who, having seen it, prayed for death. The names of Merlin the enchanter, the false knight Lancelot, and others, familiar to the thousands who have read the "Idylls of the King," constantly occur in the romances of Arthur. As has been already stated, the chronicler Geoffrey of Monmouth, who drew his materials from ancient Welsh and Breton songs, is the chief authority that we find for the story of Arthur.

The best known of the Norman-French poets is Master Wace, as he calls himself, who was born probably at Jersey about 1112. He was educated at Caen, and there he spent nearly all his life. His chief poems are two—"Brut d'Angleterre," and "Roman de Rou." The former, a translation into eight-syllabled romance verse of Geoffrey of Monmouth's history of Britain, contains nearly eighteen hun-

dred lines; the latter, the "Romance of Rollo," written partly in the same verse, narrates the history of the Dukes of Normandy from Rollo to the sixteenth year of Henry II. The central picture of this poem is the minute account of the battle of Hastings. Wace, who became Canon of Bayeux on the recommendation of Henry II., is thought to have died in England about 1184.—*Abridged from Collier's History of English Literature.*

King Lier.

From Geoffrey Monmouth's "History of the British Kings."

After the death of Bladud, Lier, his son, was advanced to the throne, and nobly governed his country sixty years. He built upon the river Sore a city, called in the British tongue Kaerlier, in the Saxon Lieccestre.* He was without male issue, but had three daughters, whose names were Gonorilla, Regan, and Cordeilla, of whom he was dotingly fond, but especially of his youngest, Cordeilla. When he began to grow old he had thoughts of dividing his kingdom among them, and of bestowing them on such husbands as were fit to be advanced to the government with them. But to make trial who was worthy to have the best part of his kingdom he went to each of them to ask which of them loved him most. The question being proposed, Gonorilla, the eldest, made answer, "That she called heaven to witness that she loved him more than her own soul." The father replied, "Since you have preferred my declining age before your own life, I will marry you, my dearest daughter, to whomsoever you shall make choice of, and give with you the third part of my kingdom." Then Regan, the second daughter, willing, after the example of her sister, to prevail upon her father's good nature, answered with an oath, "That she could not otherwise express her thoughts, but that she loved him above all creatures." The credulous father upon this made her the same promise that he did to her eldest sister, that is, the choice of a husband, with the third part of his kingdom. But Cordeilla, the youngest, understanding how easily he was satisfied with the flattering expressions of her sisters, was desirous to make trial of his affection after a different manner. "My father," said she, "is there any daughter that can love her father more than duty requires? In my opinion, whoever pretends to it must disguise her real sentiments under the veil of flattery. I have always loved you as a father, nor do I yet depart from my purposed duty; and if you insist to have something more extorted from me, hear now the greatness of my affection, which I always bear you, and take this for a short answer to all your questions: look how much you have, so much is your value, and so much do I love you." The father, supposing she spoke this out of the abundance of her heart, was highly provoked, and immediately replied, "Since you have so far despised my old age as not to think me worthy the love that your sisters express for me, you shall have from me the like regard, and shall be excluded from any share with your sisters in my kingdom. Notwithstanding I do not say but that since you are my daughter I will marry you to some foreigner, if fortune offers you any such husband; but will never, I do assure you, make it my business to procure so honorable a match for you as for your sisters; because, though I have hitherto loved you more than them, you have in requital thought me less worthy of your affection than they." And, without further delay, after consultation with his nobility, he bestowed his two other daughters upon the dukes of Cornwall and Albania, with half the

* Leicester.

island at present, but after his death, the inheritance of the whole monarchy of Britain.

It happened after this that Aganippus, king of the Franks, having heard of the fame of Cordeilla's beauty, forthwith sent his embassadors to the king to demand her in marriage. Her father, retaining yet his anger toward her, made answer, "That he was very willing to bestow his daughter, but without either money or territories; because he had already given away his kingdom with all his treasure to his eldest daughters, Gonorilla and Regan." When this was told Aganippus, he, being very much in love with the lady, sent again to King Lier, to tell him, "That he had money and territories enough, as he possessed the third part of Gaul, and desired no more than his daughter only, that he might have heirs by her." At last the match was concluded; Cordeilla was sent to Gaul and married Aganippus.

A long time after this, when Lier came to be infirm through old age, the two dukes on whom he had bestowed Britain with his two daughters fostered an insurrection against him, and deprived him of his kingdom, and of all regal authority, which he had hitherto exercised with great power and glory. At length, by mutual agreement, Maglaunus, duke of Albania, one of his sons-in-law, was to allow him a maintenance at his own house, together with sixty soldiers, who were to be kept for state. After two years' stay with his son-in-law, his daughter, Gonorilla, grudged the number of his men, who began to upbraid the ministers of the court with their scanty allowance: and having spoken to her husband about it, she gave orders that the number of her father's followers should be reduced to thirty, and the rest discharged. The father, resenting this treatment, left Maglaunus, and went to Henuinus, duke of Cornwall, to whom he had married his daughter Regan. Here he met with an honorable reception, but before the year was at an end a quarrel happened between the two families, which raised Regan's indignation, so that she commanded her father to discharge all his attendants but five, and to be contented with their service. This second affliction was insupportable to him, and made him return again to his former daughter, with hope that the misery of his condition might move in her some sentiments of filial piety, and that he with his family might find subsistence with her. But she, not forgetting her resentment, swore by the gods he should not stay with her unless he would dismiss his retinue, and be contented with attendance of one man; and with bitter reproaches she told him how ill his desire of vain-glorious pomp suited his age and poverty. When he found that she was by no means to be prevailed upon he was at last forced to comply, and, dismissing the rest, to take up with one man only. But by this time he began to reflect more sensibly with himself upon the grandeur from which he had fallen, and the miserable state to which he was now reduced, and to enter upon thoughts of going beyond the sea to his youngest daughter. Yet he doubted whether he should be able to move her commiseration, because (as was related above) he had treated her so unworthily. However, disdaining to bear any longer such base usage, he took ship for Gaul. In his passage he observed he had only the third place given him among the princes that were with him in the ship, at which, with deep sighs and tears, he burst forth into the following complaint:—

"O irreversible decree of the Fates, that never swerve from your stated course! why did you ever advance me to an unstable felicity, since the punishment of lost happiness is greater than the sense of present misery? The remembrance of the time when vast numbers of men obsequiously attended me in the taking the cities

and wasting the enemy's countries more deeply pierces my heart than the view of my present calamity, which has exposed me to the derision of those who were formerly prostrate at my feet. O the enmity of fortune! Shall I ever again see the day when I may be able to reward those according to their deserts who have forsaken me in my distress? How true was thy answer, Cordeilla, when I asked thee concerning thy love to me, 'As much as you have, so much is your value, and so much do I love you.' While I had any thing to give they valued me, being friends, not to me, but to my gifts: they loved me then, but they loved my gifts much more: when my gifts ceased, my friends vanished. But with what face shall I presume to see you, my dearest daughter, since in my anger I married you on worse terms than your sisters, who, after all the mighty favors they have received from me, suffer me to be in banishment and poverty!"

As he was lamenting his condition in these and like expressions, he arrived at Karitia,* where his daughter was, and waited before the city while he sent a messenger to inform her of the misery he was fallen into, and to desire her relief for a father who suffered both hunger and nakedness. Cordeilla was startled at the news, and wept bitterly, and with tears asked how many men her father had with him. The messenger answered that he had none but one man, who had been his armor-bearer, and was staying with him without the town. Then she took what money she thought might be sufficient, and gave it to the messenger, with orders to carry her father to another city, and to provide for him bathing, clothes, and all other nourishment. She likewise gave orders that he should take into his service forty men, well clothed and accoutred, and when all things were thus prepared he should notify his arrival to King Aganippus and his daughter. The messenger, quickly returning, carried Lier to another city, and there kept him concealed till he had done every thing that Cordeilla had commanded.

As soon as he was provided with his royal apparel, ornaments, and retinue, he sent word to Aganippus and his daughter, that he was driven out of his kingdom of Britain by his sons-in-law, and was come to them to procure their assistance for recovering his dominions. Upon which they, attended with their chief ministers of state and the nobility of the kingdom, went out to meet him, and received him honorably, and gave into his management the whole power of Gaul, till such time as he should be restored to his former dignity.

In the meantime Aganippus sent officers over all Gaul to raise an army, to restore his father-in-law to his kingdom of Britain. Which done, Lier returned to Britain with his son and daughter and the forces which they had raised, where he fought with his sons-in-law and routed them. Having thus reduced his kingdom to his power, he died the third year after. Aganippus also died; and Cordeilla, obtaining the government of the kingdom, buried her father in a certain vault, which she ordered to be made for him under the river Sore, in Leicester, and which had been built originally under the ground to the honor of the god Janus. And here all the workmen of the city, upon the anniversary solemnity of that festival, used to begin their yearly labors.

Wace's Prologue to Roman de Rou.

To commemorate the deeds, the sayings, and manners of our ancestors, to tell the felonies of felons and the baronage of barons, men should read aloud at

* Calais.

feasts the jests and histories of other times; and therefore they did well, and should be highly prized and rewarded, who first wrote books, and recorded therein concerning the noble deeds and good words which the barons and lords did and said in days of old. Long since would these things have been forgotten, were it not that the tale thereof has been told, and their history duly recorded and put in remembrance.

Many a city hath once been, and many a noble state, whereof we should now have known nothing: and many a deed has been done of old which would have passed away if such things had not been written down, and read and rehearsed by clerks.

The fame of Thebes was great, and Babylon had once a mighty name; Troy, also, was of great power, and Nineveh was a city broad and long; but whoso should now seek them could scarce find their place.

Nebuchadnezzar was once a great king; he made an image of gold sixty cubits in height and six cubits in breadth; but he who seeks ever so carefully would not, I ween, find out where his bones were laid: yet, thanks to the good clerks, who have written for us in books the tales of the past, we know and can account the marvelous works done in the days that are gone by.

Alexander was a mighty king; he conquered twelve kingdoms in twelve years; he had many lands and much wealth, and was a king of great power; but his conquests availed him little; he was poisoned and died. Cæsar, whose deeds were so many and so bold, who conquered and possessed more of the world than any man before or since could do, was at last, as we read, slain by treason, and fell in the capitol. Both these mighty men, the lords of so many lands, who vanquished so many kings, after their death held, of all their possessions, nought but their bodies' length. What availed them, or how are they better for their rich booty and wide conquests? It is only from what they have read that men learn that Alexander and Cæsar were. Their names have endured many years; yet they would have been utterly forgotten long ago if their story had not been written down.

All things hasten to decay; all fall; all perish; all come to an end. Man dieth, iron consumeth, wood decayeth; towers crumble, strong walls fall down, the rose withereth away; the war-horse waxeth feeble, gay trappings grow old; all the works of men's hands perish. Thus we are taught that all die, both clerk and lay; and short would be the fame of any after death if their history did not endure by being written in the book of the clerk.

The story of the Normans is long and hard to put into romance. If any one asks who it is that tells it and writes this history, let him know that I am Wace, of the isle of Jersey, which is in the western sea, appendant to the fief of Normandy. I was born in the island of Jersey, but was taken to Caen when young; and, being there taught, went afterward to France, where I remained for a long time. When I returned thence, I dwelt long at Caen, and there turned myself to making romances, of which I wrote many.

As was natural from the condition of the conquered Saxons, the works written in English of the second stage were few in number. The Saxon Chronicle runs on till 1154, when it ends abruptly. The following sketch of King William's character is

taken from this Chronicle; it is thought that the writer was Wulstan, the only Saxon bishop left at that time:—

King William's Character.

Alas! how false and unrestful is this earth's weal! He that before was a rich king, and lord of many lands, had then of all his lands but seven feet space; and he that was whilom clad with gold and gems, lay there overspread with mold! If any one wish to know what manner of man he was, or what worship he had, or of how many lands he were the lord, then will we write of him as we have known him; for we looked on him, and somewhile dwelt in his herd.*

This King William that we speak about was a very wise man, and very rich; more worshipful and stronger than any his foregaugers were. He was mild to the good men that loved God, and beyond all meter stark to those who withsaid his will. On the same stede where God gave him that he should win England, he reared a noble minster, and set monks there and well endowed it.

Eke he was very worshipful. Thrice he bore his king-helm † every year, as oft as he was in England. At Easter he bore it at Winchester; at Pentecost at Westminster; at midwinter at Gloucester. And then were with him the rich men over all England: archbishops and diocesan bishops; abbots and earls; thanes and knights. Truly he was eke so stark a man and wroth, that no man durst do any thing against his will. He had earls in his bonds, who had done against his will. Bishops he set off their bishoprics, and abbots off their abbacies, and thanes in prison. Betwixt other things we must not forget the good frith ‡ that he made in this land; so that a man who was worth aught might travel over the kingdom with his bosom full of gold unhurt. And no man durst slay another man, though he had suffered never so mickle evil from the other.

He ruled over England, and by his cunning he so thoroughly surveyed it, that there was never a hide of land in England that he wist not both who had it, and what its worth was; and he set it down in his writ.§ Britland ‖ was under his weald, and therein he wrought castles. And he wielded Mann-cynn ¶ withal. Scotland he subdued by his mickle strength. Normandy was his by kin; and over the earldom that is called Mans he ruled. And if he might have lived yet two years, he had won Ireland by his worship,** and without any armament.

Truly in his time men had mickle swinking, and very many hardships. He let castles be wrought, and poor men to be sorely swinked. The king was so very stark; and he took from his subjects many marks of gold and many hundred pounds of silver; and that he took of his people, some by right and some by mickle unright, for little need. He had fallen into covetousness, and greediness he loved withal.

The king and the head men loved much and overmuch the getting in of gold and silver: and recked not how sinfully it was got, so it but came to them. He let his lands to fine as dear as he dearest might. Then came some and bade more than the first had given; and the king let it to him that bade more. Then came a third, and bade yet more; and the king let it to the man who bade the most. Nor did he reck how sinfully his reeves got money of poor men, or how unlawfully they did. But the more men talked of right law the more they did against law.

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* Court. † Crown. ‡ Peace. § This is an allusion to Doomsday. ‖ Wales. ¶ The Isle of Man. ** The fame of his strength.

He set many deer-friths, and he made laws therewith that whosoever should slay hart or hind, him man should blind. And as he forbade * the harts, so eke he did the boars. He loved the high deer as much as if he were their father. Eke he set as to the hares, that they should go free. His rich men bemoaned it, and the poor men murmured, but he was so firm that he recked not the hatred of them all; and they must withal follow the king's will, if they would live, or have lands or goods, or his favor.

Wa-la-wa; that any man should be so moody, so to upheave himself, and think himself above all other men! May Almighty God have mild-heartedness on his soul, and give him forgiveness of his sins!

These things we have written of him, both good and evil, that men may choose the good after their goodness; and withal flee from evil, and go on the way that leadeth us to Heaven's kingdom.

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* Reserved to himself, or forbade others, the slaying of the harts.

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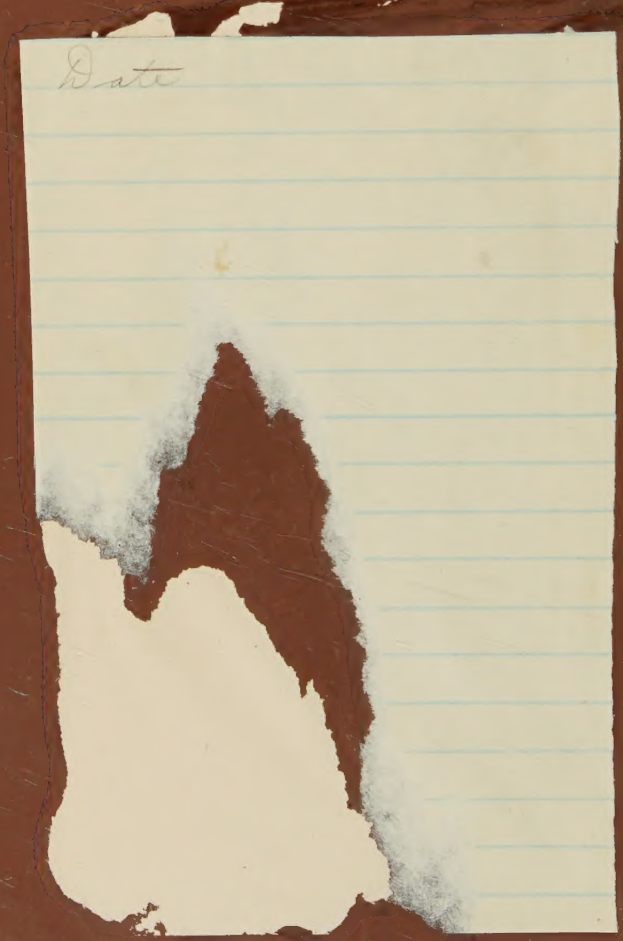
THE END.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